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State of art of social
and civic competences
and values awareness

ROMANIA



Introduction

As nationalism and xenophobia are increasing in Europe, the RAINBOW project aims to promote social inclusion and positive EU values through the introduction of non-formal education and methods into the school education. The project will create a heterogeneous community who will be trained to carry out European Values campaign and to promote empathy and understanding.

Thanks to the RAINBOW approach each project target group (secondary school teachers and students) will interiorize concepts and strategies becoming able to promote common values and civic competences.

This report is based on the results of two inquiries that have been carried out between May and September in Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Italy, Romania and Spain.

Those inquiries were addressed to secondary-level teachers and students from 12 to 19 years old and aimed at studying among others:

- Teachers' awareness of the characteristics of the media processes,
- Teachers' needs of methodological support and teaching materials,
- Teachers' knowledge and competences on civic education,
- Teachers' knowledge on the connection between civic awareness and hate speech and intolerance,
- Students' perception on prejudices, civic competences, social media, ...
- Students' needs for material.

Those inquiries gathered 1741 answers at the European level (254 for teachers, 1487 for students). In Romania, the inquiry gathered 304 answers (37 from teachers and 267 from students).

The present report aims at establishing a full picture of the needs, perceptions and awareness of teachers and learners from Romania. It also includes an analysis of non-formal methodologies and tools applicable for training on civic education, media literacy and critical thinking in secondary level schools.

"The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein."





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Part 1: Secondary-level teachers' perceptions on social and civic education and media processes

Civic and social education in Romania

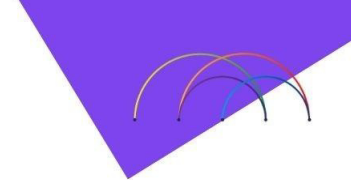
1. Topics addressed by civic and social education in Romania

The civic and social competences are taught mainly through socio-human disciplines: civic education, civic culture, logic, argumentation and communication, psychology, entrepreneurial education, economy, sociology, philosophy, social studies, applied economy and civic culture/entrepreneurship. In Romania, Civic education as a subject, is framed in the curricular area Man and Society/ *Human being and Society/Person and Society*.

For secondary level students, civic education/ Social Education / other disciplines (with a role in the formation of civic and social competences) are compulsory or optional (in the curriculum at the decision of the school), depending on grade and school type, as presented in the following table:

School	Grade	Budget time	Civic education / Civic culture/Social Education/other disciplines	
			Compulsory	Optional
Middle school education	V-VIII	1-2h / week	x	
High school	IX – XII	1h-2h / week	x	x
Vocational Education (VET)	IX-XI	1h / week	x	

At high school, the competencies specific to Civic and social education are developed through several disciplines, as part of core curriculum and/or as disciplines from differentiated curriculum, depending on the chain, profile or specialization (1-2 hours/week).

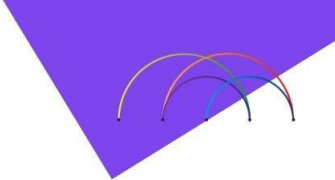


Disciplines from the High school Curriculum that include Civic and Social Education contents			
Class	Disciplines	Type of curriculum	Topics such as:
IX grade	Logic, argumentation and communication	CT*	<i>Society and communication</i> <i>Society, communication, and correct argumentation</i>
X grade	Psychology	CT*	<i>Psychosocial behaviour</i>
	Entrepreneurial education	CT*	<i>Personal resource management</i> <i>Business ethics</i>
XI grade	Economy	CT*	<i>The consumer and his rational behaviour</i> <i>Open Economy</i>
	Sociology	CT*	<i>Social problems (discrimination, infractionality, social conflicts, corruption, poverty)</i>
XII grade	Philosophy	CT*	<i>The human</i> <i>The Moral</i> <i>The Policy</i>
	Social studies	CD**	<i>Contemporary society and democracy</i> <i>Politics and democracy. Marketing element political</i> <i>Civil society and its role in democracy</i>
	Applied economics	CD**	-
* CT = common trunk, core curriculum (1 hour/week) - at all chains, profiles and specializations ** CD = differentiated curriculum (by profiles and by specializations)			

<http://programe.ise.ro/Actuale/Programeinvigoare.aspx>

In addition, a number of optional disciplines are proposed in the educational offer, included in *Curriculum at the school's decision* (CSD) for high school (1 hour/week):

Disciplines	Contents
Intercultural education	<i>Social diversity and the culture of diversity</i> <i>Education for interculturality: Let's learn to live together</i>
Education for democracy	<i>Me, the citizen</i> <i>School-family-local community</i> <i>Juridical education</i> <i>Institutions at the service of the citizen</i>
European Union Institutions	<i>European Union, European Parliament and young people</i>
Human rights	<i>Man and his rights</i> <i>Human rights and responsibilities</i> <i>Violation of human rights</i> <i>Defending human rights.</i>
Media Competence	<i>The consumer of messages transmitted through the media</i> <i>Manipulation through the media</i> <i>Minorities in the media</i>
Education for development	<i>Globalization and its problems</i> <i>Global citizenship and sustainable development</i> <i>The Global Partnership for Development</i>
Rights education of intellectual property	<i>Intellectual property and human rights intellectual property</i> <i>Intellectual property rights and their protection institutions</i>



	<i>Copyright and information culture</i>
Civic education	<i>Foundations of democracy</i> <i>Politics and democracy</i> <i>Civil society and its role in a democracy</i>
Financial education	<i>Needs and projects of individuals and families</i> <i>Banking services for the population</i>
International humanitarian law	<i>The humanitarian perspective</i> <i>Limits in armed conflict</i> <i>The right in action</i> <i>Reactions to the consequences of the war</i>

Source: <http://programe.ise.ro/Actuale/Programeinvigoare.aspx>

Vocational Education is organized after the eighth grade, as part of upper secondary education and has a duration of 3 years. The curricula and curriculum for each qualification are approved by order of the Minister of Education and Research. The disciplines through which civic and social competences are formed, within vocational education, are the following: *Logic, argumentation and communication* (common trunk, 9th grade, 1 h / week), *Psychology* (common trunk, 10th grade, 1h / week), *Entrepreneurship education* (common core, 11th grade, 1 h / week), *Counselling and guidance* (discipline integrated in the differentiated curriculum, allocated 1 h / week, in the 9th, 10th grades, 11th grade).

The discipline *Logic, argumentation and communication* directly aims at education for society by forming the necessary skills for communication. Social education is focused in this case on the issue of communication.

This discipline contributes to the progressive formation of key competences for lifelong learning, recommended by the Parliament and the Council of the European Union, especially in the following areas of key competences:

- Social and civic competences
- Communication in the mother tongue
- Learning to learn
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Cultural awareness and expression
- Digital competences

The *Psychology* discipline contributes to the progressive formation of the key competences established by the European Commission, especially regarding the interpersonal, intercultural, and social competences.

The *general competences* covered by this discipline are similar to the discipline studied in the ninth grade.

The content areas addressed are: *Psychic processes and their role in personality evolution, Personality structure and development and Psychosocial behaviour*.

Entrepreneurial education aims at the following *general competences*:

1. Using the specific concepts of entrepreneurial education for organizing the approaches of knowledge and explanation of some facts, events, processes in real life
2. Applying the knowledge specific to entrepreneurial education in situations characteristic of the market economy, as well as in analysing the possibilities of personal development
3. Cooperation within different groups to solve theoretical and practical problems specific to the business environment
4. Assessing the appropriate behaviour of a changing economic and social environment

5. Formulation of opinions regarding the solution of community problems, regarding the initiation and conduct of business

The discipline *Counselling and guidance* aims at the formation of some *general competences*, of which we consider as representative also for civic education / social education, the following:

1. Exploring personal resources for career planning and development
2. Use the necessary tools for learning and work
3. Manifestation of a lifestyle favourable to change and adaptation to new learning and work contexts

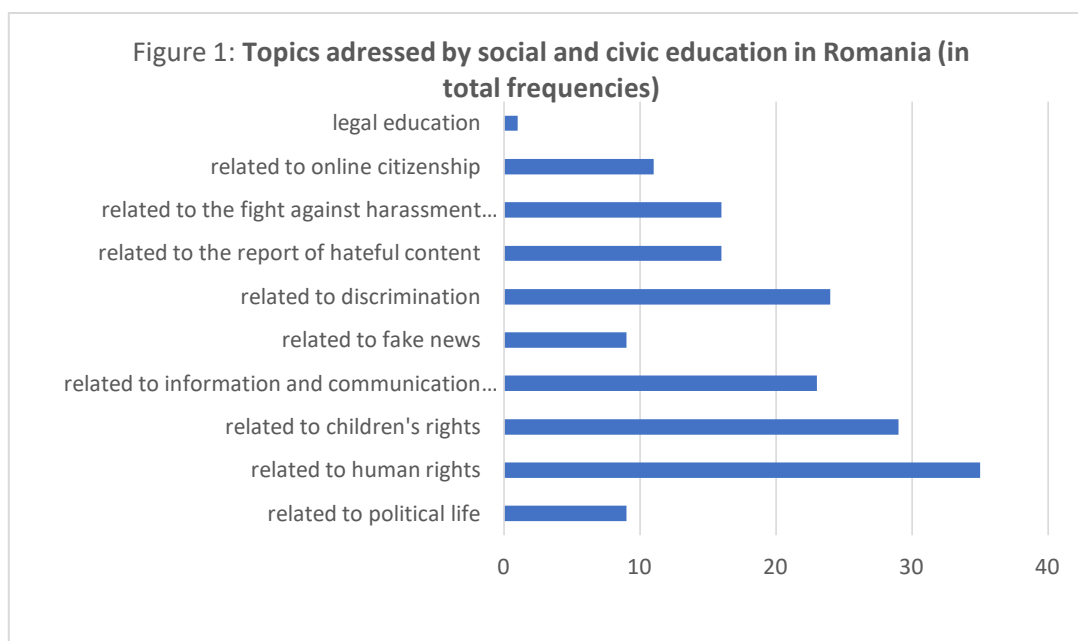
Disciplines from the Vocational Education Curriculum that include Civic and Social Education contents			
Class	Disciplines	Type of curriculum	Topics such as:
IX grade	Logic, argumentation and communication	CT*	<i>Society and communication, Society, communication and argumentation, Society, communication, and correct argumentation.</i>
X grade	Psychology	CT*	<i>Psychic processes and their role in personality evolution, Personality structure and development, Psychosocial behaviour.</i>
XI grade	Entrepreneurial education	CT*	<i>Personal resource management, Business ethics, Risk, and business success.</i>
9th, 10th grades, 11th grade	Counselling and guidance	CD**	<i>Self-knowledge and personal management, Interpersonal communication, Lifestyle, and work.</i>
* CT = common trunk, core curriculum (1 hour/week) - at all chains, profiles, and specializations			
** CD = differentiated curriculum (by profiles and by specializations)			

Source: <http://programe.ise.ro/Actuale/Programeinvigoare.aspx>

In the frame of our survey, the first question aimed to identify teachers' opinion about the topics addressed by civic and social education in Romania.

According to the teachers surveyed, all the topics listed in the question are addressed by civic and social education in Romania (see topics below in the figure 1). In addition, one teacher added one more topic: *legal education*. Most of the Romanian teachers, respondents to our survey (35 out of 37, 94,6%) selected the topics related to *human rights*. The majority also selected the topics related to *children's rights* (78,4%), *discrimination* (64,9%) and *information and communication rights* (62,2%). The less selected topics are those related to *fake news* (24,3%) and *political life* (24,3%).

The generality of the themes in the civic education curriculum gives the teachers the freedom to address a diversity of topics, reflected in the respondents' answers.



2. Level of sufficiency of the civic and social education provided to secondary level students

The level of sufficiency of the civic and social education provided to pupils is, according to our respondents mid to high. 25 teachers (68%) indicated a level of sufficiency between 5 to 10, and only 32% indicated a level less than 6.

3. Current strengths of social and civic education

Asked to indicate “*possible improvements and the main strengths of the ways civic competences are taught*” the teachers gave different answers. Usually the answers do not separate the two aspects addressed in the question: *possible improvements* and *main strengths*. Most of the answers seem to refer to the *possible improvements*.

Although, within the answers, there can be identified several *strengths of social and civic education*:

The students' desire to know today's society, to be treated like mature people;

Civic education classes improve civic competences;

It acquaints students with democratic values, principles, and concepts, with human and child rights.

4. Possible improvements that could be implemented

The *possible improvements* that could be implemented, indicated by the teachers, may be framed in several categories:

- Create discussions, contests, debates, role-playing games, trips (12 answers)
- Implement civic activities and projects, practical activities (11 answers)
- Work on real world examples (positive and negative) (6 answers)
- Organize professional training of teachers (3 answers)
- Encourage students to participate in volunteer activities (3 answers)
- Invite specialized people to class (2 answers)

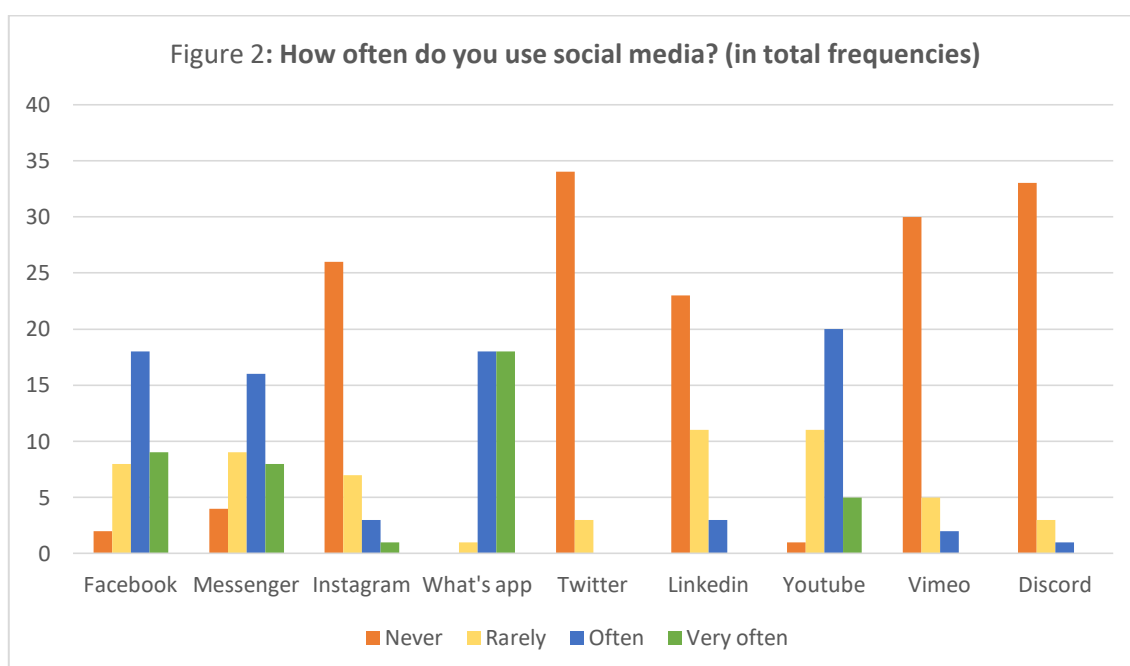
5. Teachers' perception on the connexions between civic awareness and hate speech

The teachers' answers to the question whether the civic education can tackle hate speech, are interesting:

- 8 teachers (22%) have chosen a level between 1 and 4 (out of 10), which means they consider that civic education can tackle hate speech in a low degree.
- 16 teachers (43%) selected a mid-level (between 5 and 7 out of 10)
- 13 teachers (35%) selected a level between 8 and 10 out of 10, which means they consider that civic education can tackle hate speech in a high degree.

Secondary level teachers' personal and professional use of social media

Asked how often they use different social media platforms, the respondent teachers declared that they use most What's app (36 out of 37 use it *often* and *very often*), followed by Facebook (27 out of 37 use it *often* and *very often*), YouTube (25 out of 37 use it *often* and *very often*) and Messenger (24 out of 37 use it *often* and *very often*). All the other platforms are significantly less used by the respondents. Twitter is the least used social media: 34 teachers out of 37 never used it and 3 teachers use it rarely.



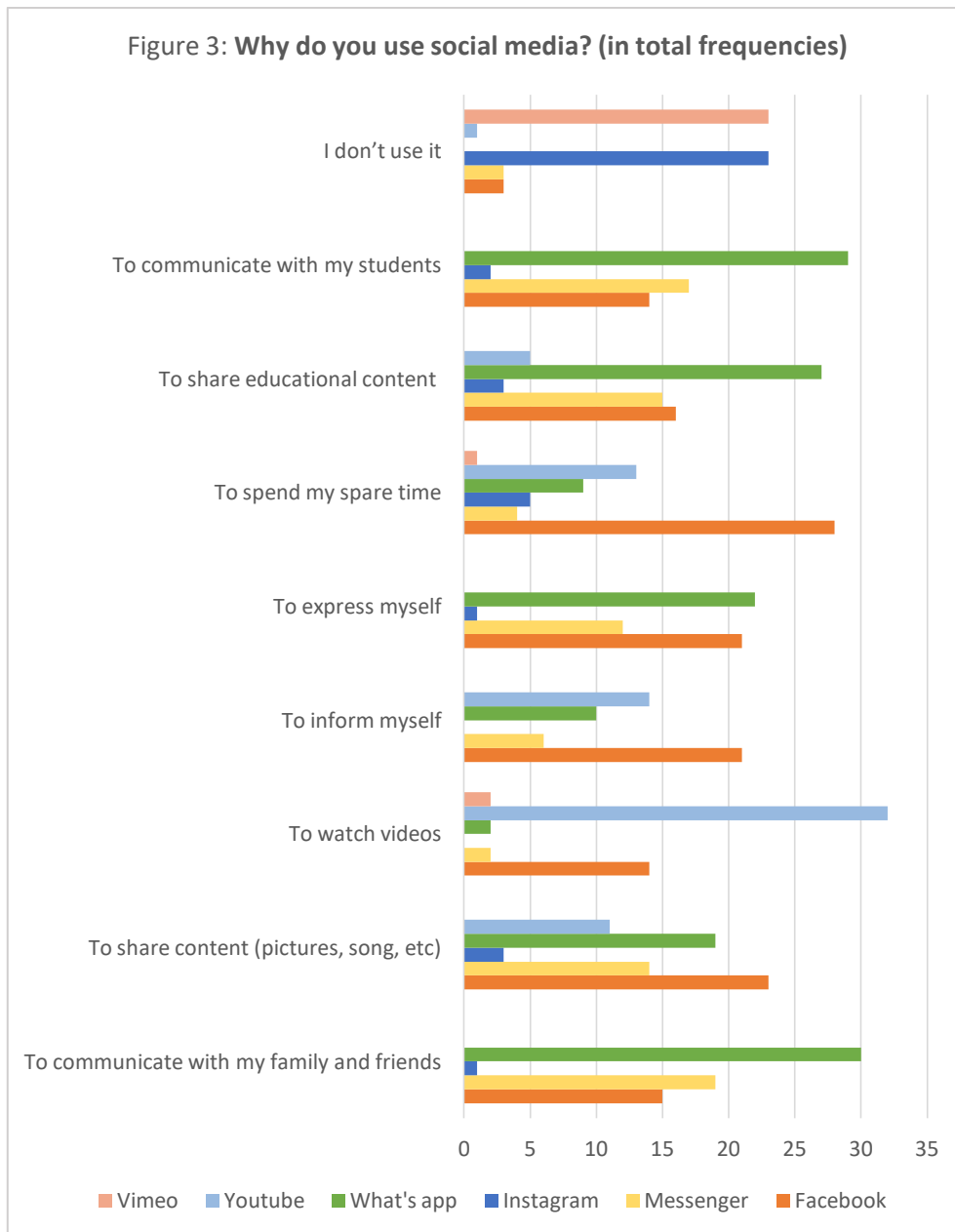
If we rank from the most used to the less used social media platforms (summing up the number of teachers who use *often* and *very often* these social media) we obtain the list in the following table. The table also contains the main reasons indicated by the respondents, for the first 4 social media platforms, for what they use it (no matter how often).



Table 1. Ordered list of social media platforms, by how often are used by the teachers and reasons for using it

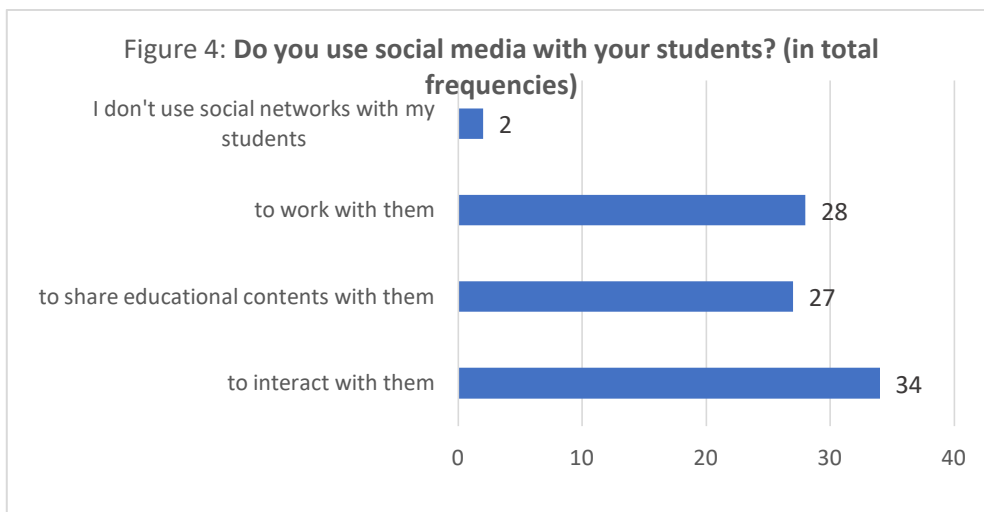
No.	Social media	Often and very often (out of 37)	Main reasons
1	What's app	36	To communicate with family and friends (30 out of 37, 81%) To communicate with my students (29 out of 37, 78%) To share educational content (27 out of 37, 73%) To express myself (22 out of 37, 59%) To share content (19 out of 37, 51%)
2	Facebook	27	To spend my spare time (28 out of 37, 76%) To share content (23 out of 37, 62%) To inform myself (21 out of 37, 57%) To express myself (21 out of 37, 57%)
3	YouTube	25	To watch videos (32 out of 37, 86%) To inform myself (14 out of 37, 38%) To spend my spare time (11 out of 37, 30%) To share content (11 out of 37, 30%)
4	Messenger	24	To communicate with family and friends (19 out of 37, 51%) To communicate with my students (17 out of 37, 46%) To share educational content (15 out of 37, 41%) To share content (14 out of 37, 38%)
5	Instagram	4	-
6	LinkedIn	3	-
7	Vimeo	2	-
8	Discord	1	-
9	Twitter	0	-





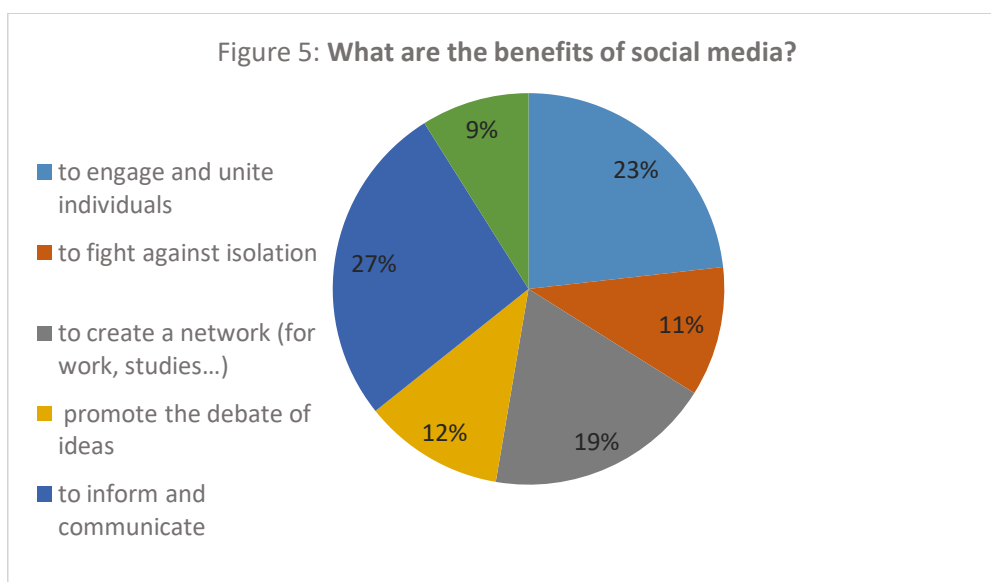
Most of the teachers use social media with **their** students (only 2 teachers declared that do not use social media with the students).

Most of the teachers use social media with the students for all three reasons suggested: to interact with the students (91,9%), to work with them (75,7%) and to share educational content with the students (73%).



Secondary level teachers' perception of social media and their processes

1. The benefits of social media according to teachers

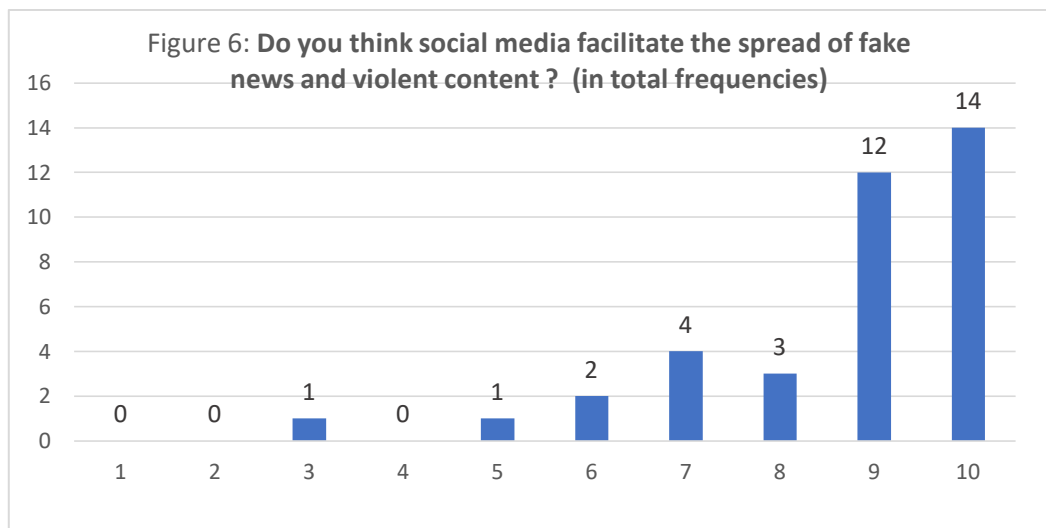


The main benefits of social media indicated by the respondents are:

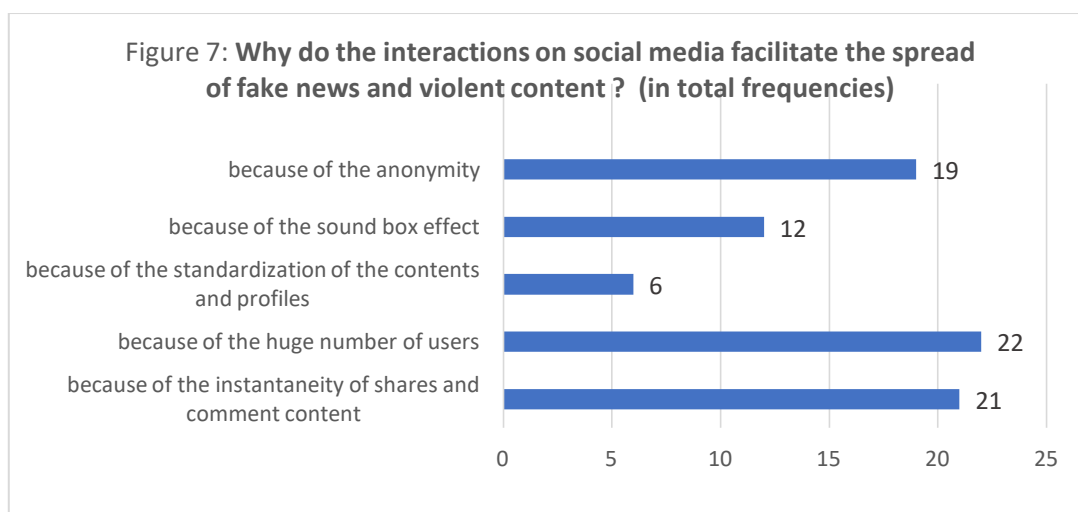
- it enables to inform oneself and to communicate (81%)
- it enables to engage oneself and to be united with other people (70%)
- it helps to create some networks (for work, studies...) (57%)

2. Teachers' perception of the connexions between social media and hate speech

A wide number of teachers consider that social media facilitates the spread of fake news and violent content: 95% (35 respondents) answered a level bigger than 5 and 70% (26 respondents) answered a level of 9 or 10 (which means they consider that social media facilitates, in a very high degree, the spread of fake news and violent content).



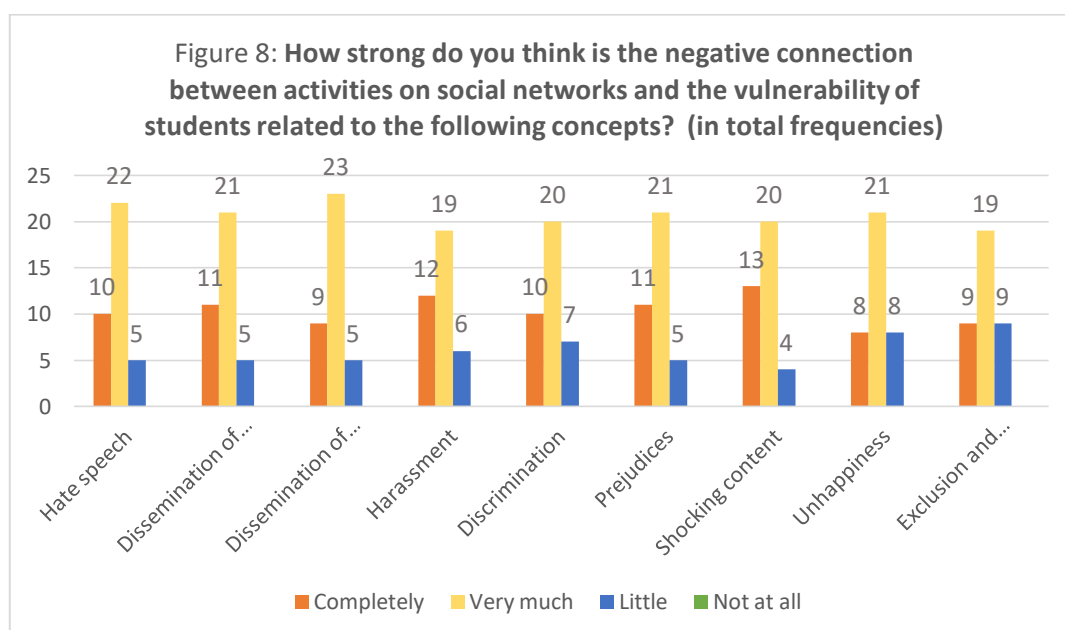
Regarding the reasons, many teachers consider that the interactions on social media facilitate the spread of fake news and violent content because of (1) the huge number of users (59%), (2) the instantaneity of shares and comment content (57%) and (3) anonymity (51%).



Asked how strong they think is the negative connection between activities on social networks and the vulnerability of students related to a given list of concepts, there have been obtained the results presented in the following table.

Table 2. Number of teachers who consider that it exists a strong or very strong negative connection between activities on social networks and the vulnerability of students related to a list of given concepts

No.	Concepts	No. of teachers (out of 37) who consider a <i>strong</i> and <i>very strong</i> negative connection
1	Shocking content	33 teachers (13 – very strong, 20 - strong)
2	Hate speech	32 teachers (10 – very strong, 22 - strong)
3	Dissemination of violent content	32 teachers (11 – very strong, 21 - strong)
4	Dissemination of conspiratorial content and false information	32 teachers (9 – very strong, 23 - strong)
5	Prejudices	32 teachers (11 – very strong, 21 - strong)
6	Harassment	31 teachers (12 – very strong, 19 - strong)
7	Discrimination	30 teachers (10 – very strong, 20 - strong)
8	Unhappiness	29 teachers (8 – very strong, 21 - strong)
9	Exclusion and withdrawal	28 teachers (9 – very strong, 19 - strong)



It is important to mention that over 76% of the teachers consider the negative connections between activities on social networks and the vulnerability of students to all given concepts are strong and very strong. Another important aspect to be mentioned is that only one teacher considered that there is no negative connection between activities on social networks and the vulnerability of students related to only one concept: *exclusion and withdrawal*. All the other teachers consider there are negative connections related to all given concepts.

3. Media literacy, the answer to fight against fake news and online hate speech?

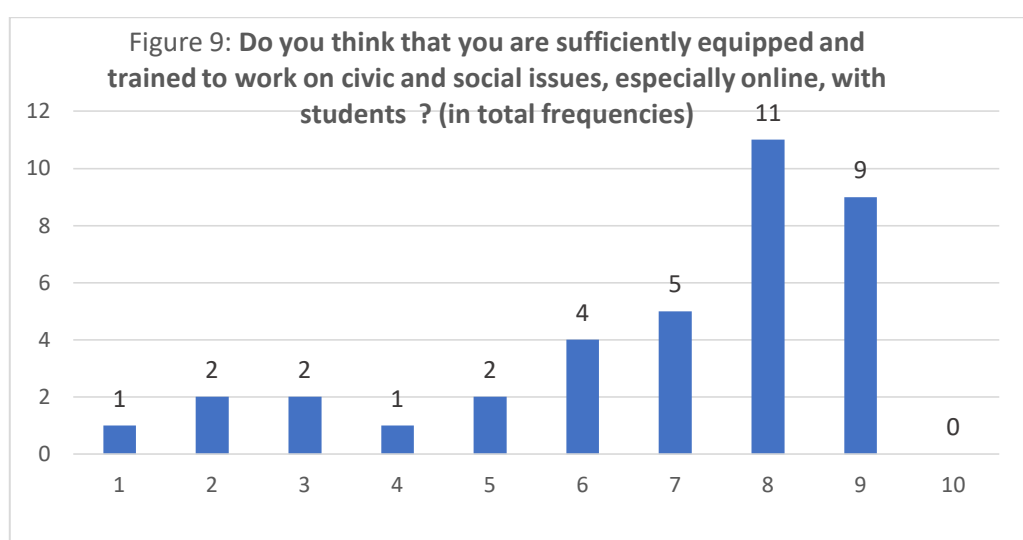
To the question “Do you consider that the students’ media literacy is sufficient to fight against fake news and online hate speech?” most of the respondents selected a number in a lower part of the given scale from 1 to 10. So, 24 (65%) of the teachers who participated to the study have chosen a level between 1 and 5, and 13 (35%) a level between 6 and 10. We may notice that only one teacher out of 37 consider the students’ media literacy are really sufficient to fight against fake news and online hate speech.

Secondary-level teachers' needs of methodological support and teaching materials to tackle civic and social issues

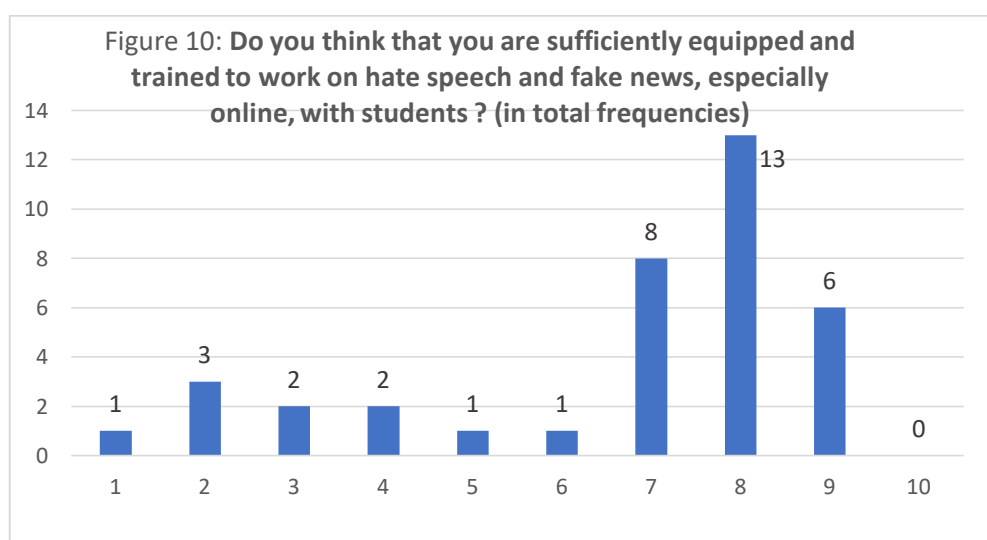
All 37 teachers (100%) who participated to this study declared they work on social media with their students.

1. State of art of the sufficiency of the existing tools/trainings to work both on civic and social issues and on hate speech and fake news

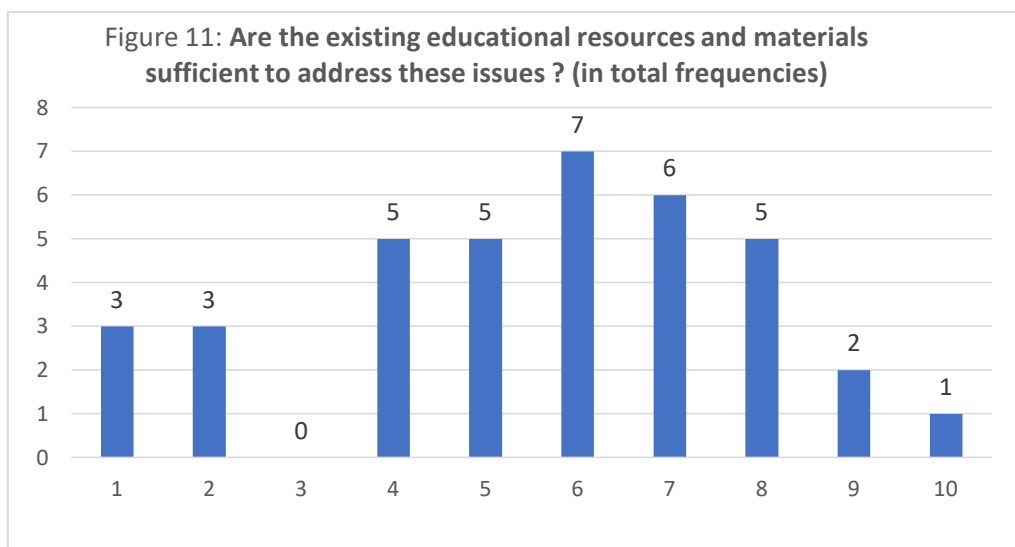
Most of the teachers are confident in their social and civic competences and skills (54% score themselves with a 8 or 9) but, none of the teachers consider that he is sufficiently equipped and trained to work on civic and social issues, especially online, with students.



Comparable results have been obtained when the teachers had to evaluate their competences and skills to work on hate speech and fake news, especially online, with students. We may notice that those who evaluated themselves with a 9 are less this time (with 3 teachers less than to the previous question).

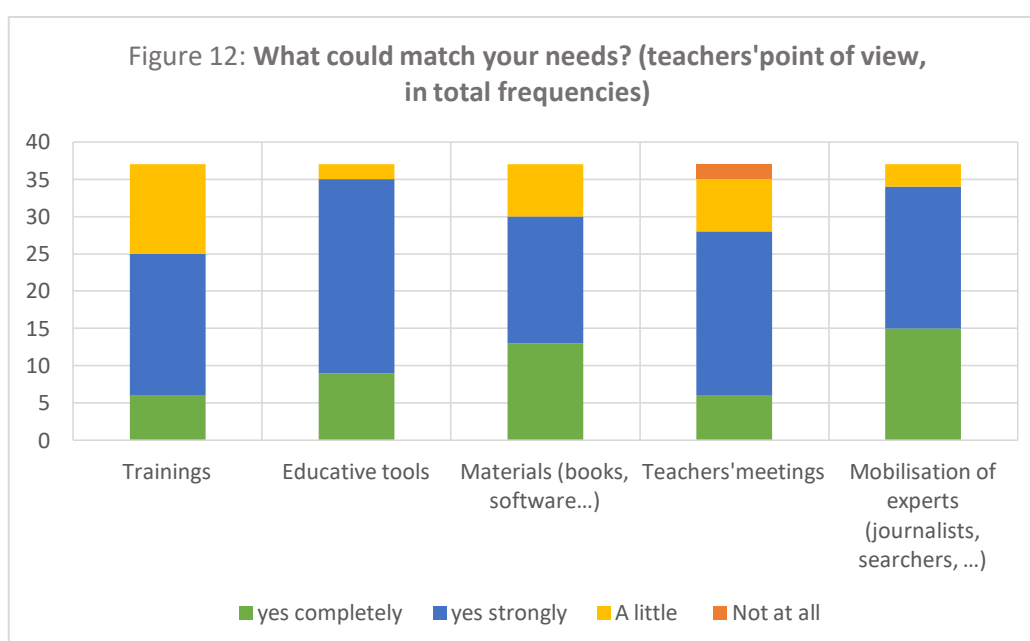


Most of the teachers consider the existing educational resources and materials are not fully sufficient to address the issues related to hate speech, fake news, social and civic issues. Most of the respondents (76%) evaluate the existing educational resources and materials with a value between 4 and 8, on a scale from 1 to 10.

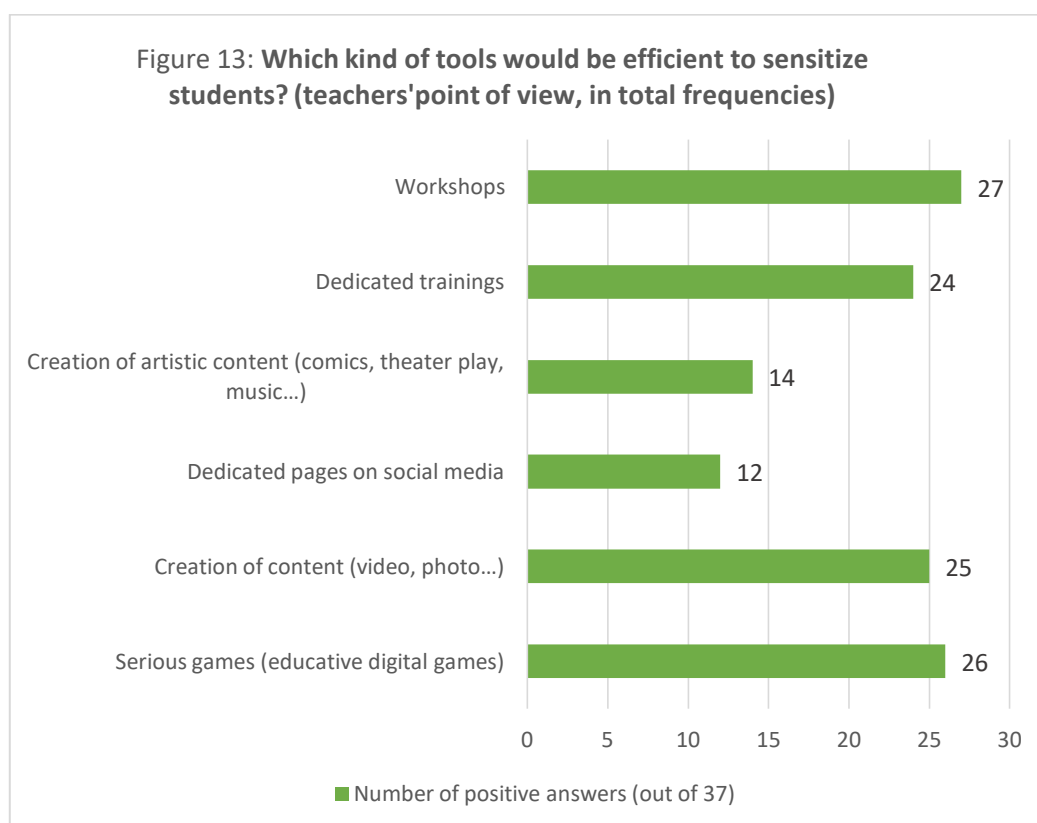


2. Some materials that would match the teachers' needs

When we ask teachers what could meet their need to better practice their profession, 15 of them (41%) consider that the mobilisation of experts is completely necessary (they responded "yes, completely"). *Materials* (books, software) are also a must for 13 teachers (35%). If we sum up the number of teachers who selected the answers "yes, completely" and "yes, strongly" we discover that *educative tools* (95%), followed by *mobilisation of experts* (92%) are very important for most of the teachers. It is also interesting to underline that for 2 teachers, the teachers' meetings are considered as not useful at all to better practice their profession.



In terms of tools that would be efficient to sensitize students, teachers' first option is *workshops* (27 teachers, 73%), followed closely by *serious games (educative digital games)* (26 teachers, 70,3%), *creation of content (video, photo)* (25 teachers, 67,6%) and *dedicated trainings* (24 teachers, 64,9%). The option considered by the respondents less efficient is *dedicated pages on social media* (12 teachers, 32,4%).



Part 2: Secondary level students' perceptions on prejudices, tolerance, civic competences, social media

Secondary level students' perception of civic and social competences

1. Being a good adult citizen: what does it mean for students?

For most of the Romanian students who participated to our study, the most important behaviour for being a good adult citizen is to *know the human rights*: 181 (68%) students out of 267 consider it *very important* and 67 (25%) consider it *quite important* (in total 248 out of 267, which means 93% of the respondents).

The next table, Table 3, shows the list of the behaviours, from the most important to the less important, taking into consideration only how many students considered each behaviour as "*very important*" for being a good adult citizen. Table 4 takes into consideration both "*very important*" and "*quite important*" votes.

Table 3. The list of behaviours, ordered by how many votes of "very important" have received

No.	Behaviour	No. of votes of „Very important”
1	Knowledge of humans' rights	181
2	Taking part in activities to protect the environment	156
3	Voting in every election	151
4	Respecting the rights of others to have their own opinions	151
5	Always obeying the law	148
6	Ensuring the economic welfare of your families	147
7	Making personal efforts to protect natural resources (e.g. through saving water or recycling waste)	142
8	Taking part in activities promoting human rights	134
9	Supporting people who are worse off than you	123
10	Participating in activities to benefit people in the local community	102
11	Respect different opinions and trust other people	100
12	Working hard	92
13	Engaging in activities to help people in less developed countries	85
14	Learning about the country's history	67
15	Participating in peaceful protests against laws believed to be unjust	66
16	Showing respect for government representatives	24
17	Following political issues in the newspaper, on the radio, on TV or on the Internet	12
18	Joining a political party	11
19	Engaging in political discussions	4



Table 4. The list of behaviours, ordered by how many votes of “very important” and “quite important” have received

No.	Behaviour	No. of votes of „Very important” and “quite important”
1	Voting in every election	249
2	Knowledge of humans’ rights	248
3	Respecting the rights of others to have their own opinions	246
4	Supporting people who are worse off than you	246
5	Taking part in activities to protect the environment	245
6	Ensuring the economic welfare of your families	244
7	Taking part in activities promoting human rights	243
8	Always obeying the law	242
9	Making personal efforts to protect natural resources (e.g. through saving water or recycling waste)	241
10	Working hard	230
11	Respect different opinions and trust other people	228
12	Engaging in activities to help people in less developed countries	224
13	Participating in activities to benefit people in the local community	221
14	Learning about the country's history	210
15	Participating in peaceful protests against laws believed to be unjust	171
16	Showing respect for government representatives	144
17	Following political issues in the newspaper, on the radio, on TV or on the Internet	116
18	Joining a political party	78
19	Engaging in political discussions	57

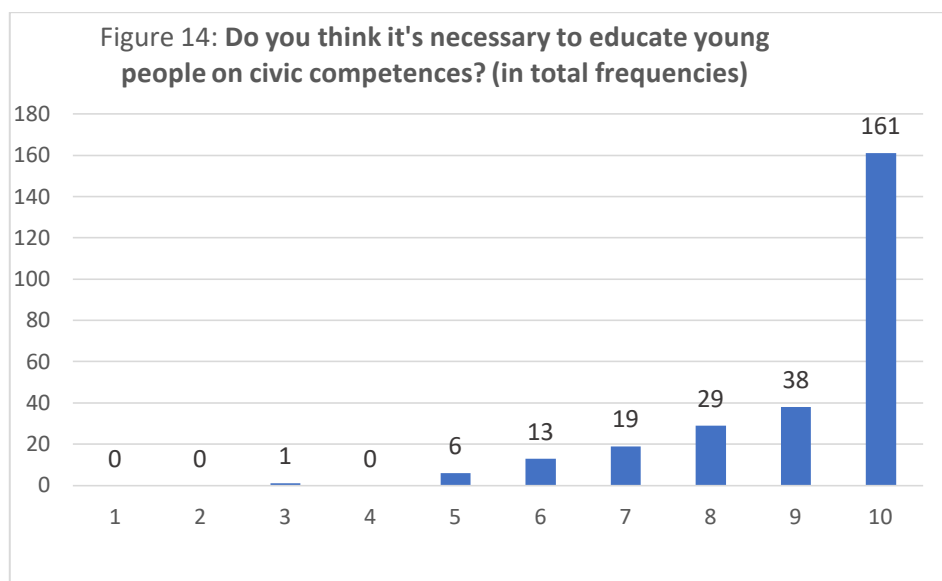
Comparing the two lists from Table 3 and Table 4, we notice the last 6 positions are the same. We also notice that the behaviours from the last three positions, in terms of importance, are referring to getting involved in politics. We may conclude that the Romanian students do not appreciate that - let us say - *involving in politics* is important for being a good adult citizen. Also interesting to notice is that voting in every election is considered quite important or very important for 93% of the respondents (247 out of 267 students).

2. Students’ awareness to social and civic competences

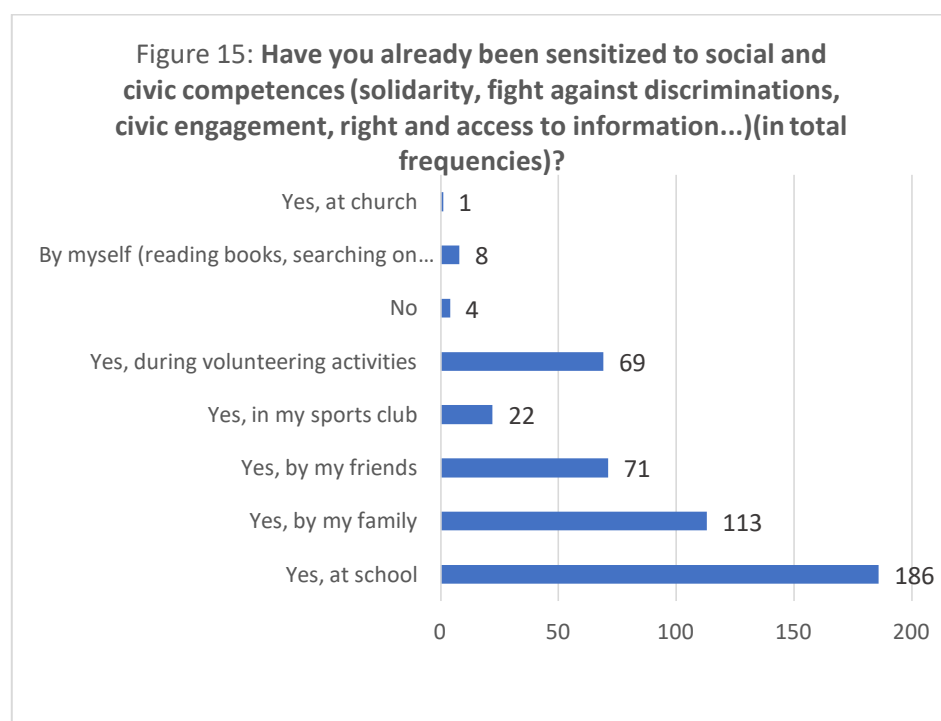
As defined in the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (2006/962/EC): **social and civic competences** include personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and cover all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life, and particularly in increasingly diverse societies, and to resolve conflict where necessary. Civic competence equips individuals to fully participate in civic life, based on knowledge of social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation.



To the question “Do you consider it’s necessary to educate young people on civic competences?”, on a scale from 1-Not agree at all to 10-Totally agree, all the students’ answers are situated on the upper part of the scale, and 60% of the respondents voted “Totally agree”.



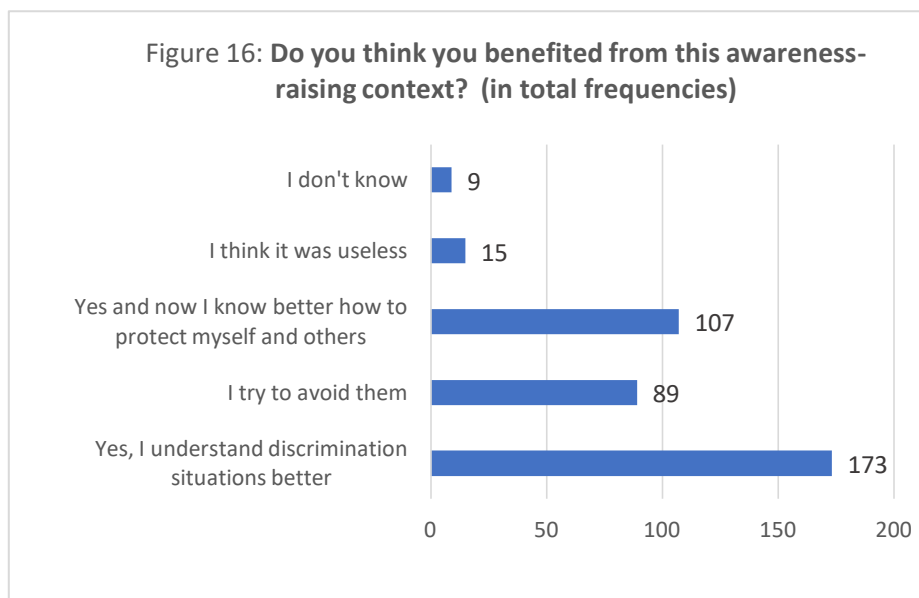
In Romania, school seems to be an important vector in sensitizing to social and civic competences of students (for 70% of the students), followed, but not very closely, by family (for 42% of the students).



Although the predefined answering options included only “Yes” answers, 4 students added a “No” answer. Two of the four students who added the “No” answer, voted also for a Yes answer (one selected “Yes, during volunteering activities” and the other one selected “Yes, at school”). Since the No answer has been obviously added intentionally, it might suggest a dissatisfaction regarding how or how much they have been sensitized to social and civic competences.

8 students from the total of 267 answered they learned by themselves, by reading books, from Internet, in society, by experiencing discrimination.

Although 99% of the respondents declared were sensitized to social and civic competences in different contexts, 6% of them (15 students) consider it was useless and other 3% (9 students) do not know if they benefited or not from these awareness-raising contexts. 65% of the students understand discriminations situation better, 40% declared they understand better how to protect themselves and others and 33% try to avoid this type of situations.



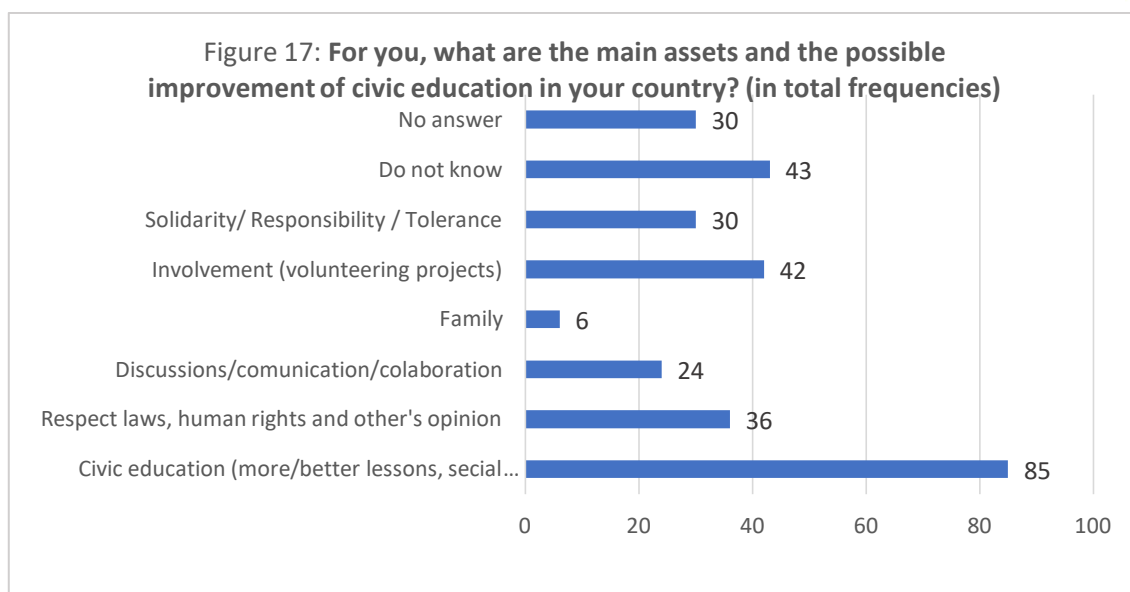
3. Students' suggestions to improve social and civic education in Romania

Asked *What are the main assets and the possible improvement of civic education in their country?*, the respondents gave different answers. Some focused on main assets and some on improvements. 32% of the respondents gave answers related to education. They considered it would be useful: to have more civic education classes (e.g. mandatory civic education in upper secondary education, more civic education classes per week, etc.) or better classes, more focused on practical activities and real life cases; to integrate civic education themes in other subjects such as history; to have special civic education courses; to have dedicated television shows that aim to raise population awareness on civic and social aspects; to involve specialists in civic education, etc.

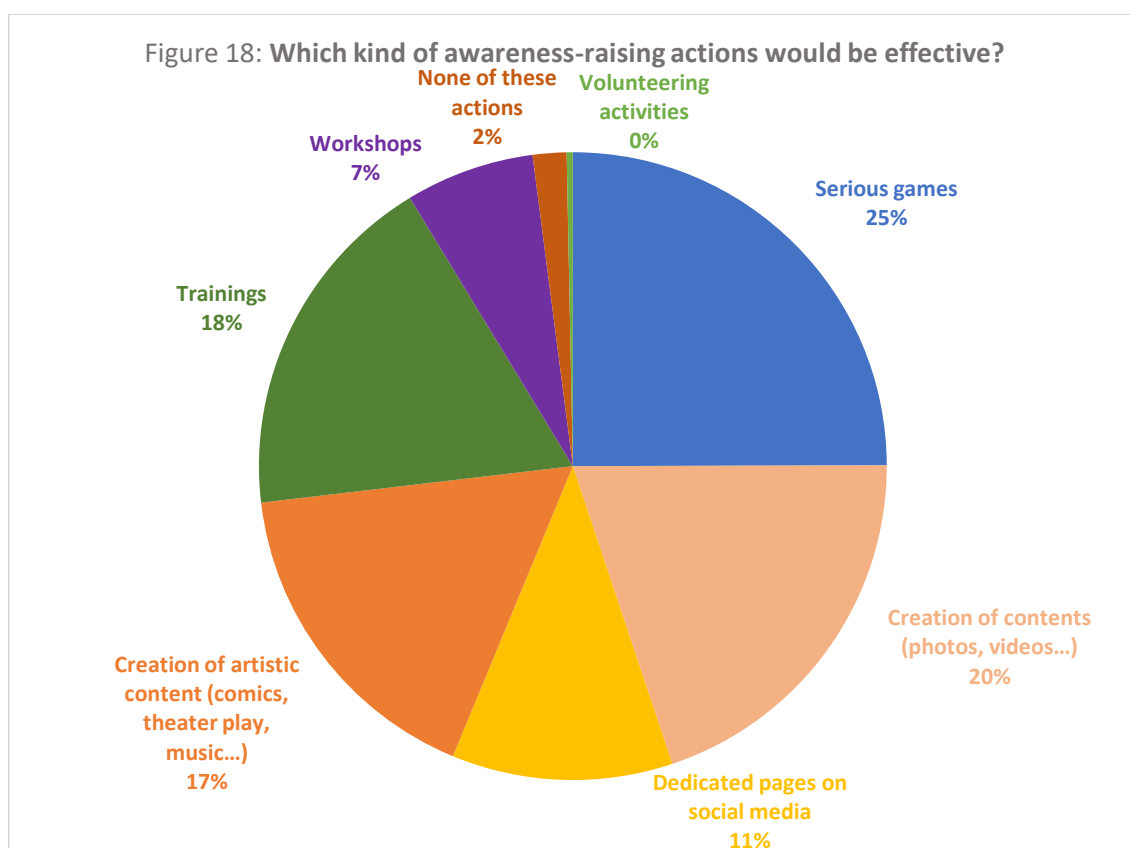
132 students (49%) considered that getting involved, participation in volunteering activities, showing solidarity, tolerance, and responsibility, knowing the human rights, showing respect to the others, respecting laws, communication, collaboration and responsibility would also be of great help.

43 students (16%) responded that they do not know what to respond to this question and another 30 students (11%) gave no answer (put a dash or a dot so they could go to the next question).

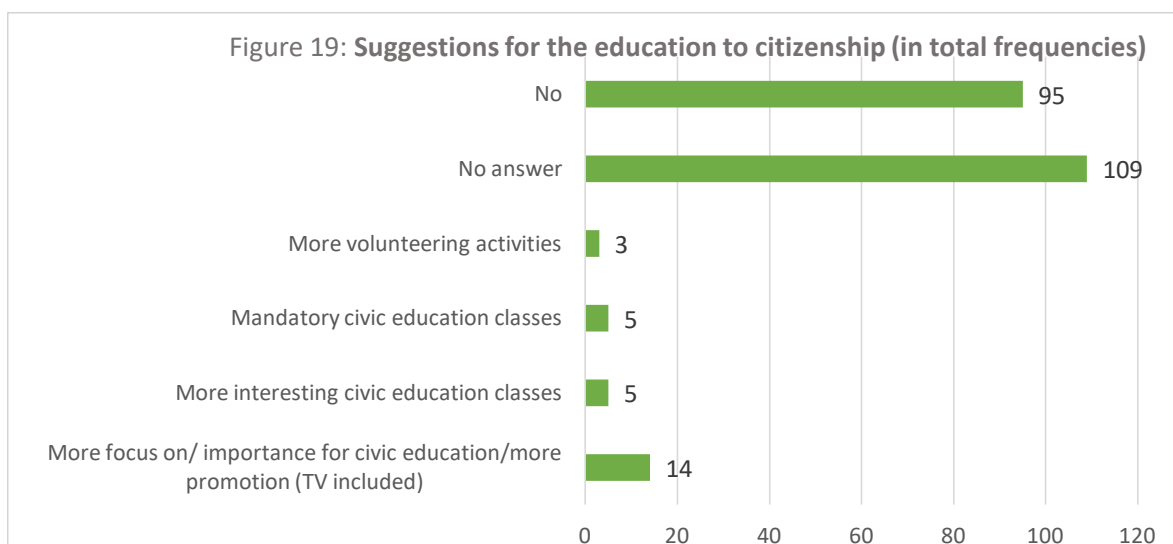
Among the respondents there were also some pessimistic (6 students) who consider that civic education in Romania has nothing good or is almost inexistent.



For most of the students serious games (59%), creation of contents (photos, videos) (47%), trainings (43%), creation of artistic content (40%) and, in a lower degree, dedicated pages on social media (27%) and workshops (16%) could be effective, but for 11 students none of these actions would be. Two students added volunteering activities, as an answer.



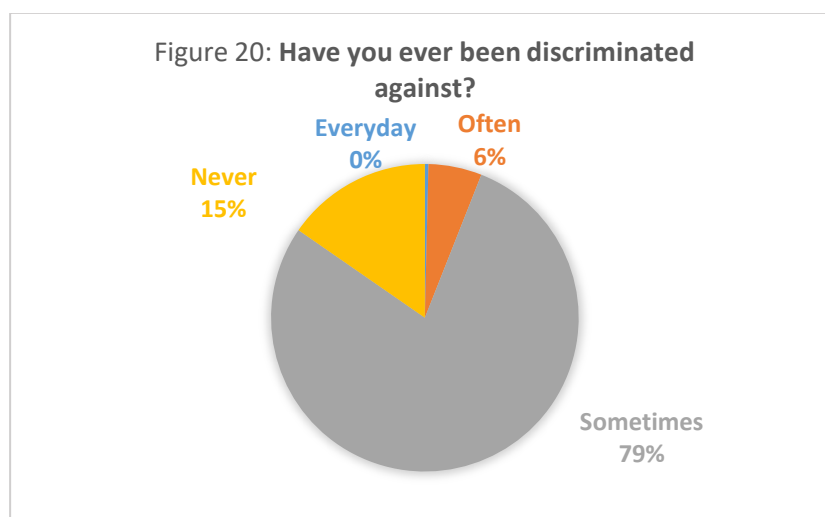
When asked for suggestions for the education to citizenship, only few students answered. Their answers include: to give more importance to civic education in schools and mass media (14 students), to make the classes more interesting and practical (5 students), to have mandatory civic classes both in primary and secondary education (5 students) and more volunteering activities (3 students).



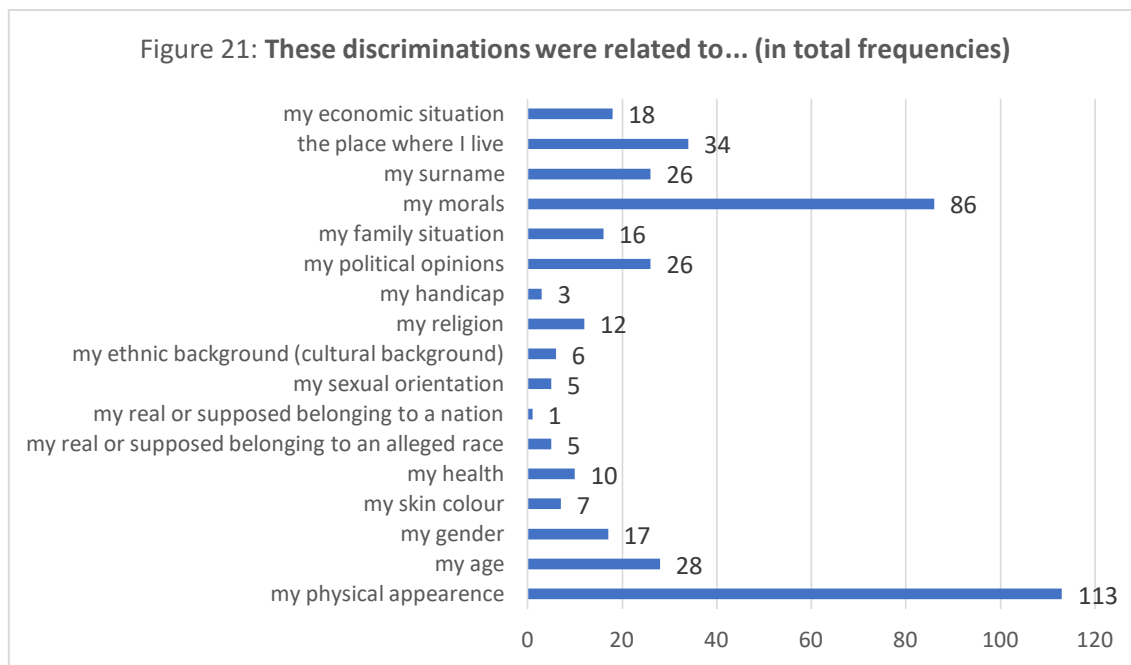
Secondary level students' experience and perception of discriminations

1. Have you ever been discriminated or witnessed discriminations?

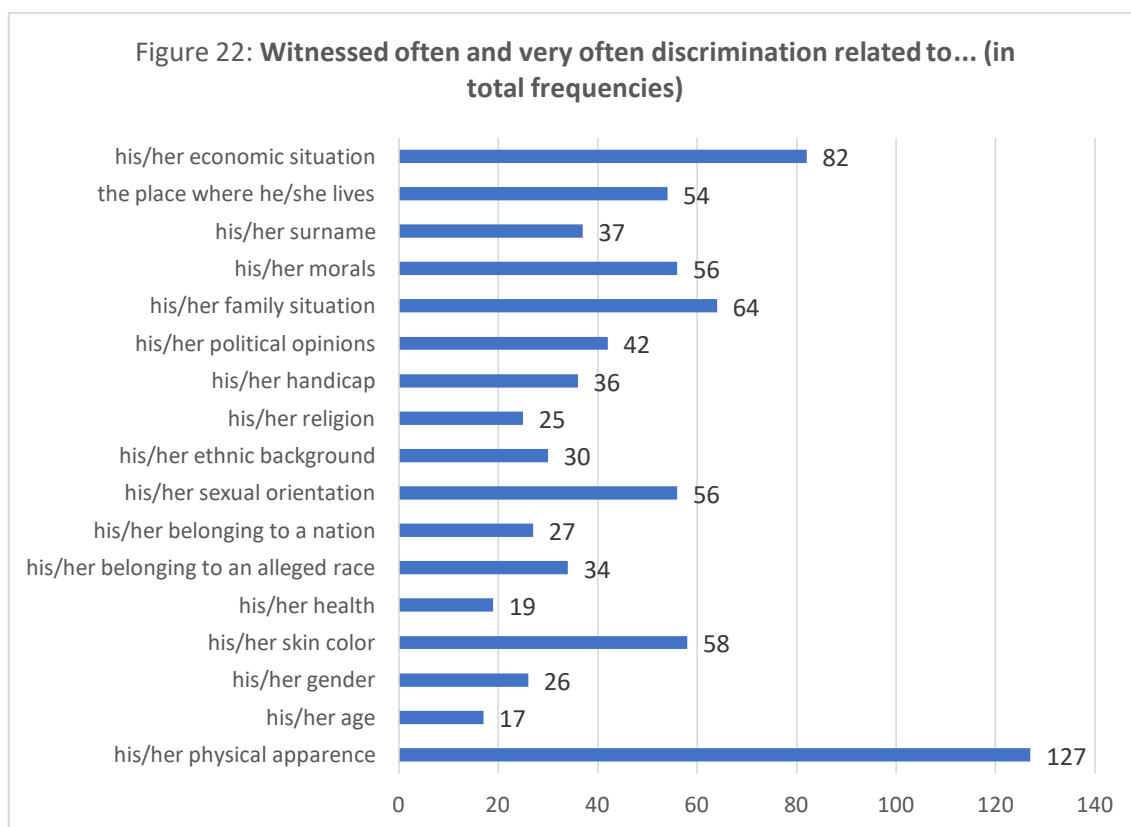
The collected data about if/how often the respondents are or have been discriminated shows that a big percentage (85%) have experienced discrimination often or sometimes. One student declared being discriminated daily.



According to the students' answers, the first reason they have been discriminated is related to their physical appearance (42% of the students) and the second reason is related to their morals (32%).



Most of the students witnessed discrimination situation. Most of these discrimination situations were related to physical appearance of the person who was discriminated (48%), his/her economic situation (31%), followed by his/her family situation (24%), skin colour (22%), his/her morals (21%) and sexual orientation (21%).



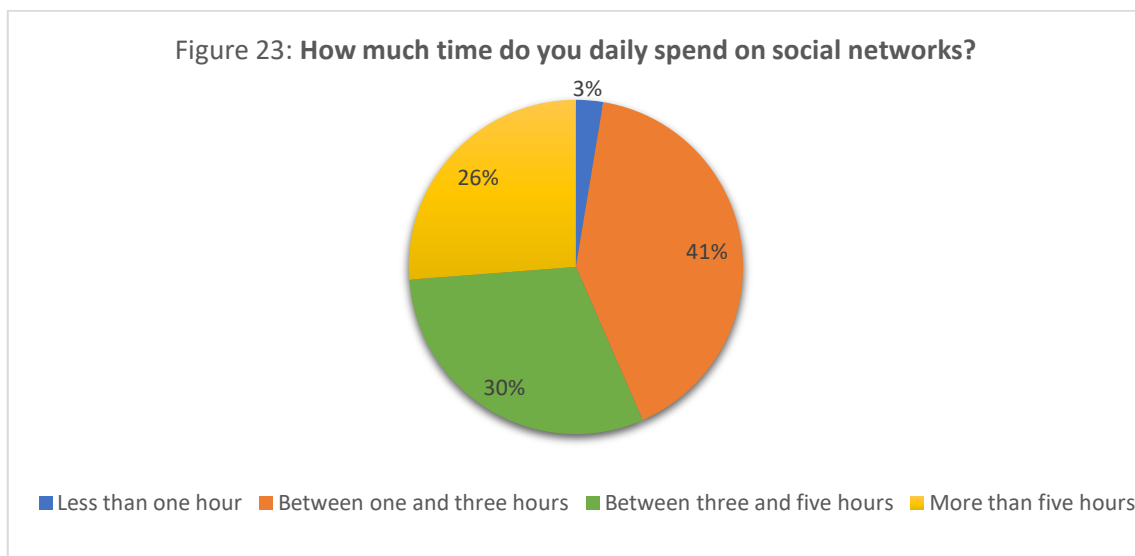
2. Why do people discriminate others?

The main reason for what some people discriminate against others, in respondents' opinion, is close-mindedness (75,28%). Misunderstanding (31,46%) and ignorance (23,59%) are also two reasons selected by many students. Some students added envy, entourage, and frustration as reasons for some to discriminate against others.

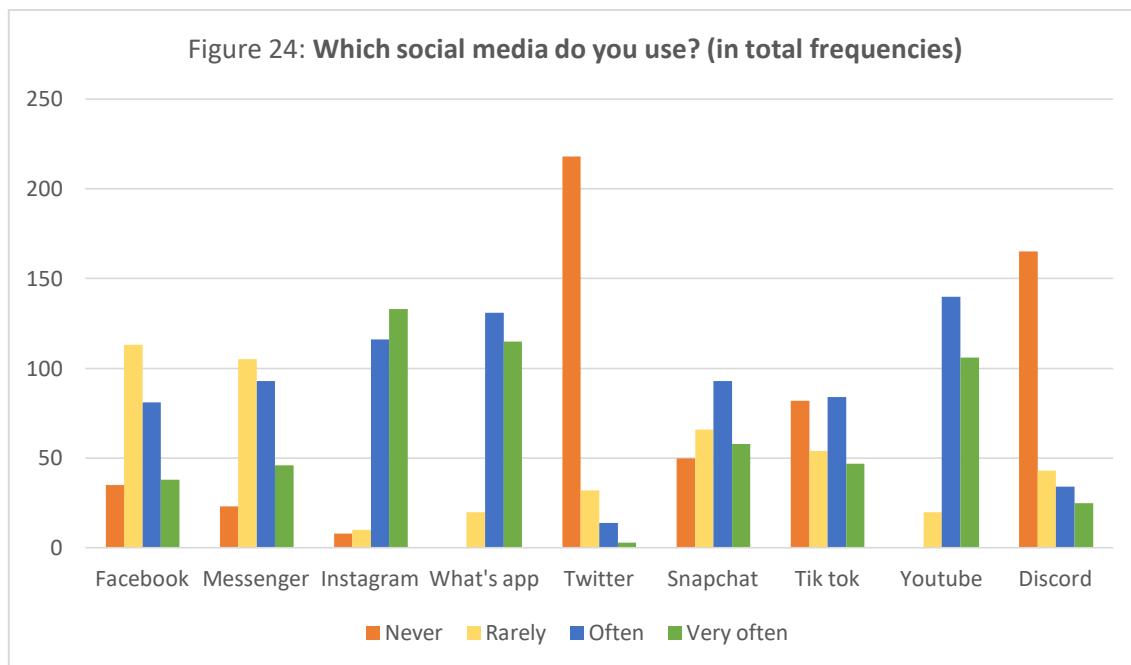
Students' experience with social media, fake news and violent content

1. Students' use of social media

Analysing the following chart, we noticed that most of the respondents spend daily a considerable time on social networks. Only 7 out of 267 students spend less than 1 hour. All the others spend more than one hour and 26% (70 out of 267) spend more than 5 hours/day on social media networks.



The following figure shows how often the respondents use different social media networks.



The following table shows an ordered list of social media networks, by how many students declared they use it often or very often.

Table. 5 List of social media networks ordered by number of votes of “often” and “very often”.

No.	Social media network	No. of votes of “often” and “very often” (out of 267)
1	Instagram	249
2	What's app	246
3	Youtube	246
4	Snapchat	151
5	Messenger	139
6	Tik tok	131
7	Facebook	119
8	Discord	59
9	Twitter	17

Analysing the Figure 24 and Table 5, we notice that Instagram (93% of the students use it often and very often), What’s app (92%) and YouTube (92%) are the most popular social media networks among Romanian students, respondents to our survey. The next social media network in the list, Snapchat (51%), is quite far positioned from the three previously mentioned networks. The less used platform is Twitter (6% votes of *often* and *very often*).

It is also of interest to see how many students declared they never use the indicated social media networks.

- As we can notice, 82% of the students never use Twitter, 62% never use Discord and 31% never use TikTok
- The students were asked also to indicate the reasons why they use each social media network. They had to choose from a predefined list of reasons or to indicate if they don’t use it.

The following two tables presents the answers to this question presented: by reason and by social media network.

Table 6. Reasons for what the students use social media networks, presented by reason

No.	Reason	Top 3 social media
1	To communicate with my family and friends	1. What's app (79%) 2. Instagram (62%) 3. Messenger (58%)
2	To share content (pictures, song, etc)	1. Instagram (71%) 2. What's app (46%) 3. Facebook (29%) / Snapchat (27%)
3	To watch videos	1. YouTube (89%) 2. TikTok (48%) 3. Instagram (33%)
4	To inform myself	1. YouTube (55%) 2. Facebook (42%) 3. Instagram (33%)
5	To express myself	1. Instagram (67%) 2. Facebook (26%) 3. What's app (25%)
6	To spend my spare time	1. Instagram (80%) 2. YouTube (54%) 3. TikTok (41%)
7	To communicate with my teachers	1. What's app (84%) 2. Messenger (30%) 3. Facebook (12%)

To communicate with family, friends but also teachers, *What's app* is the students' first choice. To share content, to express themselves and to spend their spare time they prefer *Instagram*, and they prefer *YouTube* to watch videos and to inform themselves. If we analyse the percentages, we notice that in most of the cases, the first choice is quite far from the second one.

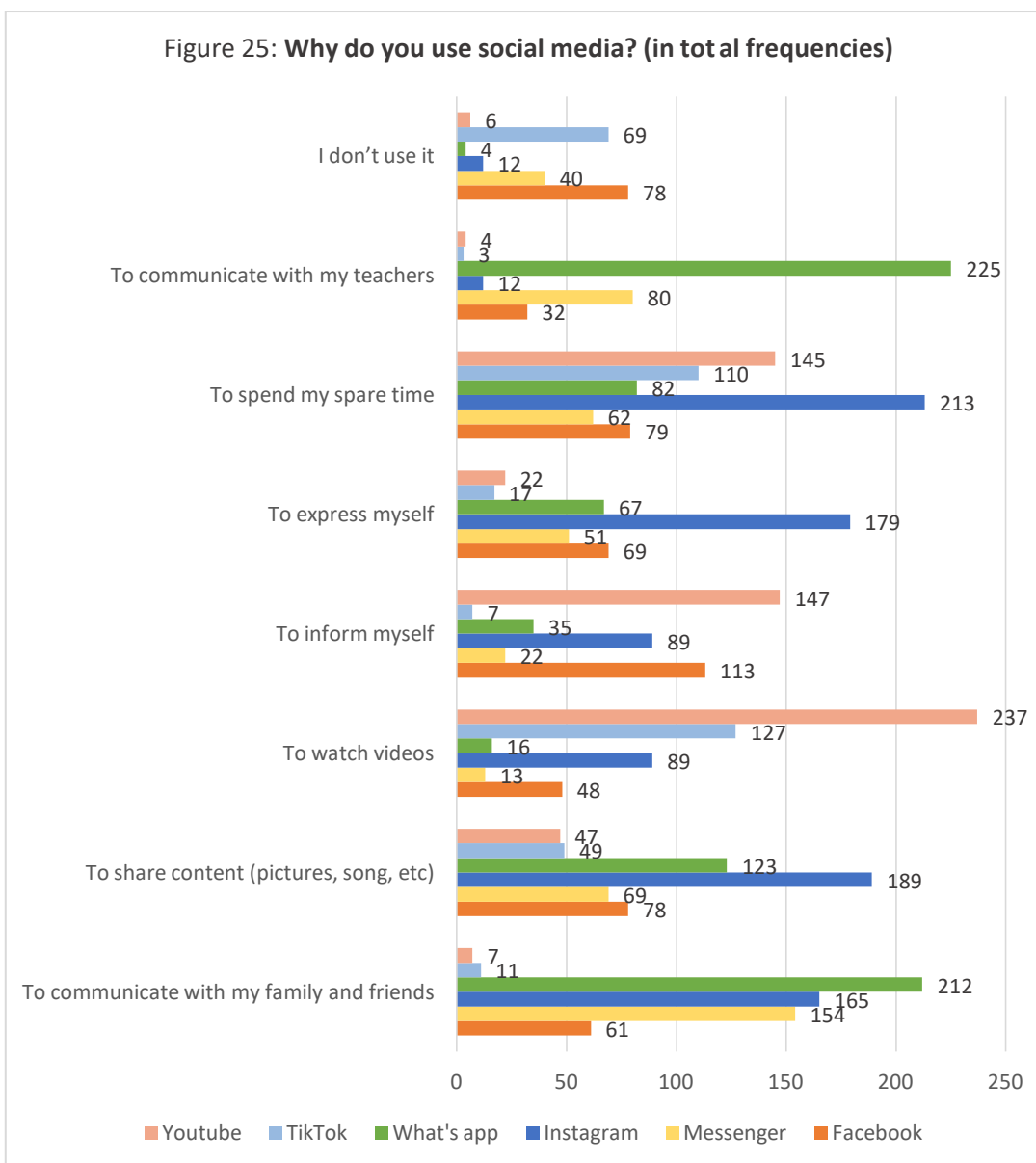
The students' answers organized by each social media network shows the main reasons why the respondents use each of it (Table 7). Except *Messenger* and *What's app* which are focused by design on communication, all the other social media networks have among the three main reasons *to spend their spare time*.

Table 7. Reasons for what the students use social media networks, presented by social media network

No.	Social media network	Top 3 reasons
1	Facebook	1. To inform myself (42%) 2. To spend my spare time (30%) 3. To share content (pictures, song, etc) (29%) / I don't use it (29%)
2	Messenger	1. To communicate with my family and friends (58%) 2. To communicate with my teachers (30%) 3. To share content (pictures, song, etc) (26%)
3	Instagram	1. To spend my spare time (80%) 2. To share content (pictures, song, etc) (71%)

		3. To express myself (67%)
4	What's app	1. To communicate with my teachers (84%) 2. To communicate with my family and friends (79%) 3. To share content (pictures, song, etc) (46%)
5	Twitter	1. I don't use it (65%) 2. To spend my spare time (9%) 3. To express myself (7%) / To inform myself (7%)
6	Snapchat	1. To spend my spare time (30%) 2. To share content (pictures, song, etc) (27%) 3. To communicate with my family and friends (19%)
7	Tik Tok	1. To watch videos (48%) 2. To spend my spare time (41%) 3. I don't use it (26%)
8	YouTube	1. To watch videos (89%) 2. To inform myself (55%) 3. To spend my spare time (54%)

Figure 25: **Why do you use social media? (in total frequencies)**



2. Students' experience with fake news, online hate speech and violent content

23% of the respondents admitted they have faced violent situations on social media and 43% have witnessed such type of situations (Figure 26).

Most of the students (87%) never experienced a situation in which someone posted an insulting picture or text about them on the web but a lower percentage (80%) of the respondents declared they didn't do it for someone else (to post an insulting picture or text about someone on the web) (Figure 27). The number of the respondents who have friends who has been in such situations is higher: 23% has experienced once, 14% has experienced 2 to 4 times in the last 4 months and 2% more than 4 times.

A percentage of 69% were witnessed in the last 4 months to posts of insulting pictures or texts about different type of groups such as: LGBT+ people, migrants, or women.

Figure 26: Have you ever been confronted to violent situations on social media? (hate speech, harassment, threats...) (in total frequencies)

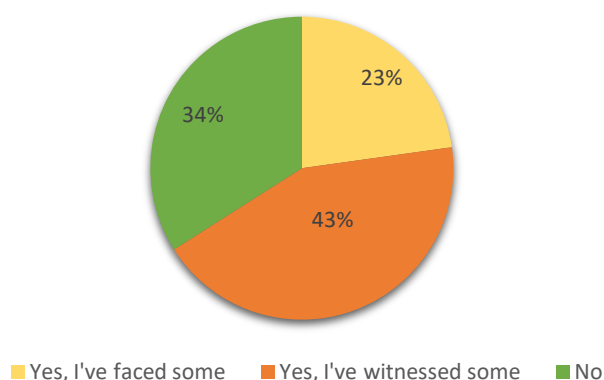
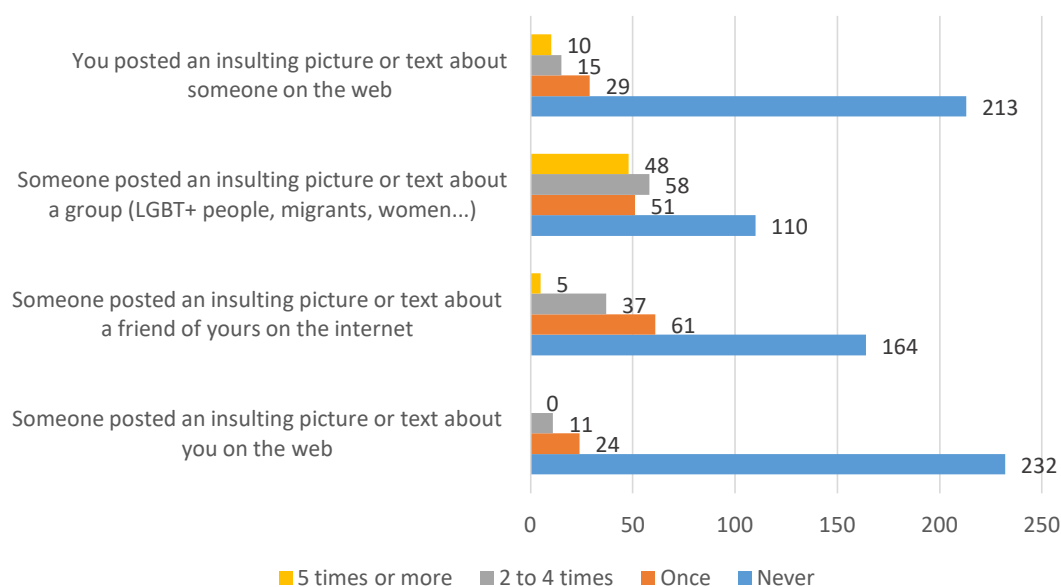


Figure 27: How often did the following situations happen during the last 3 months ? (in total frequencies)

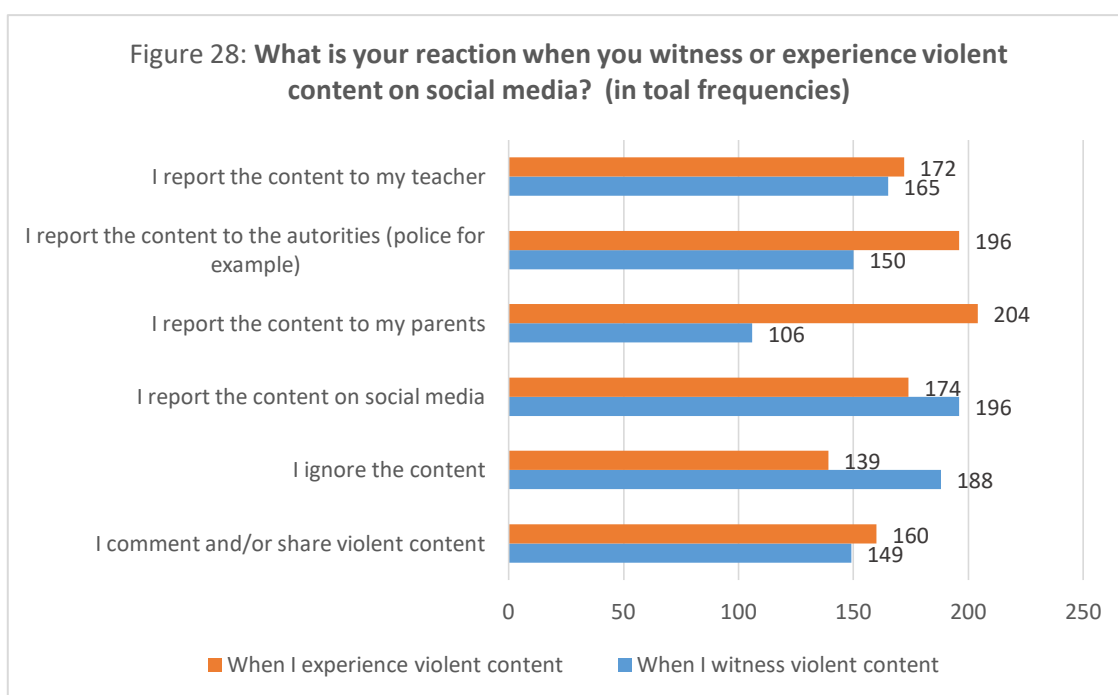


The students were asked if they want to share a violent situation that they have witnessed on social media. 65% of the respondents answered *No* in several forms: 7% gave no answer (put a dash or a dot as an answer) or they specified they do not want to share; 51% answered with a simple *No* or *I don't know* and 6% said they never witnessed a violent situation on social media.

A percentage of 24% of the respondents shared situations of violent behaviour/ insults/ threatening or harassment against them or other (known or unknown) people. Many of these situations were related to someone's physical aspect.

9% of the respondents shared situations related to discrimination of minorities (sexual, ethnic, religious, etc.).

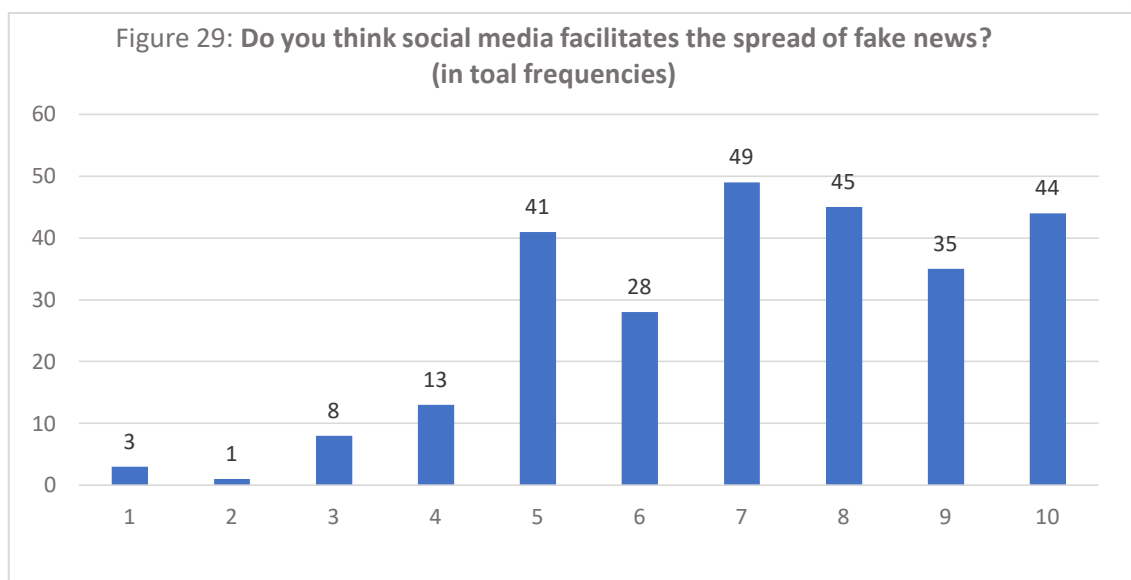
Some students shared situations related to cruelty on animals and 3 students mentioned situations when LGBT groups or religious fanatics had a violent behaviour when the others *did not* agree with their beliefs.



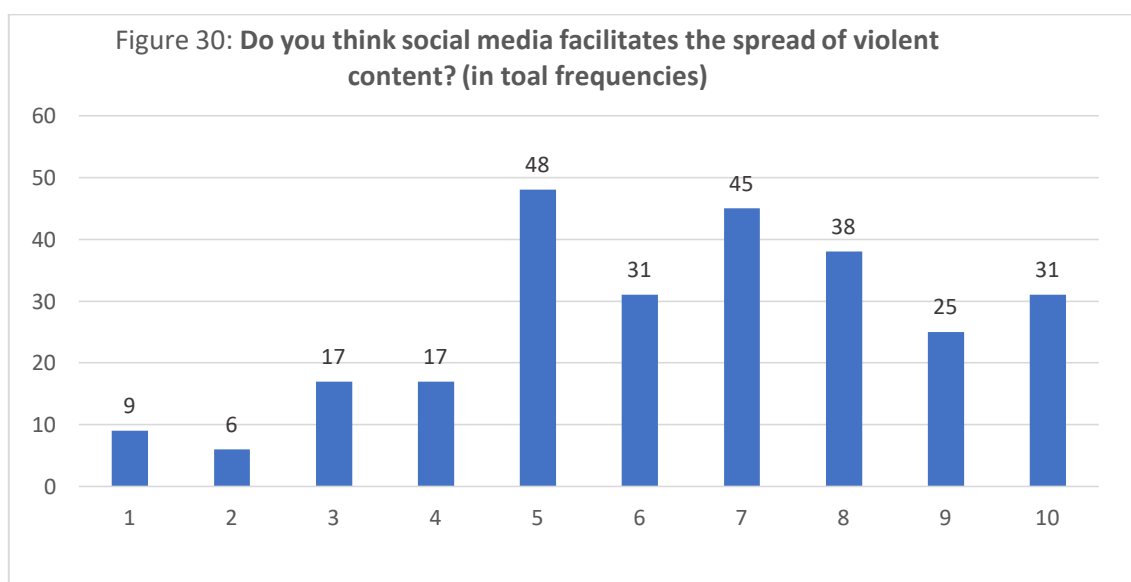
When they are the target of the violent content, 52% of the students, in some cases, ignore the content. In most of cases they report the content to their parents (73%), to the authorities (73%), on social media (65%) and/or to their teacher (64%).

When they witness a violent content on social media, 73% of the respondents report the content on social media. A great majority (70%) declared they ignore the content.

Most of the Romanian students who participated to this survey consider that, from a medium to a large extent, social media facilitates the spread of fake news (Figure 30) – 75% of the students voted a value between 6 and 10 and 90% voted a value between 5 and 10.



Regarding the spread of violent content through social media, the number of students who voted a value in the lower part of the scale is a slightly higher. Most of the votes are more concentrated in the middle of the scale (5 to 8).



Students' awareness about the characteristic of the media processes in the digital era

The students trust most their parents (79% of the students completely trust their parents). If we count the votes of *Very much* and *Completely* we discover on the first three positions: parents (95%), army (78%) and school (76%).

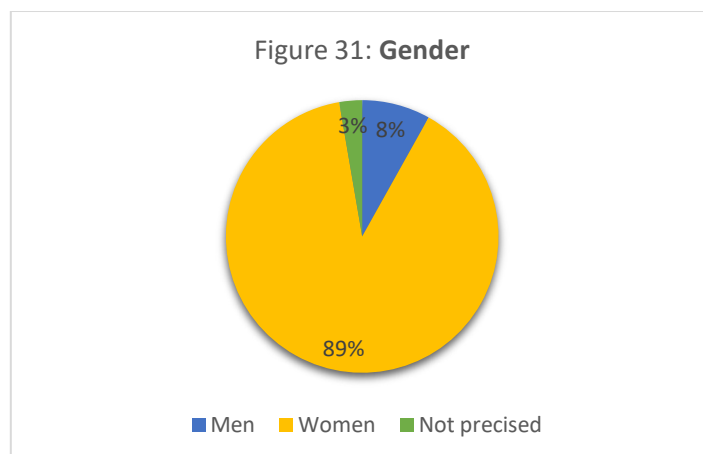
The institutions, groups or information resources the students trust less are the political parties (42% of the students do not trust at all), media (23% do not trust at all), social media (15%) and people in general (15%)

Appendices: profile of the participants

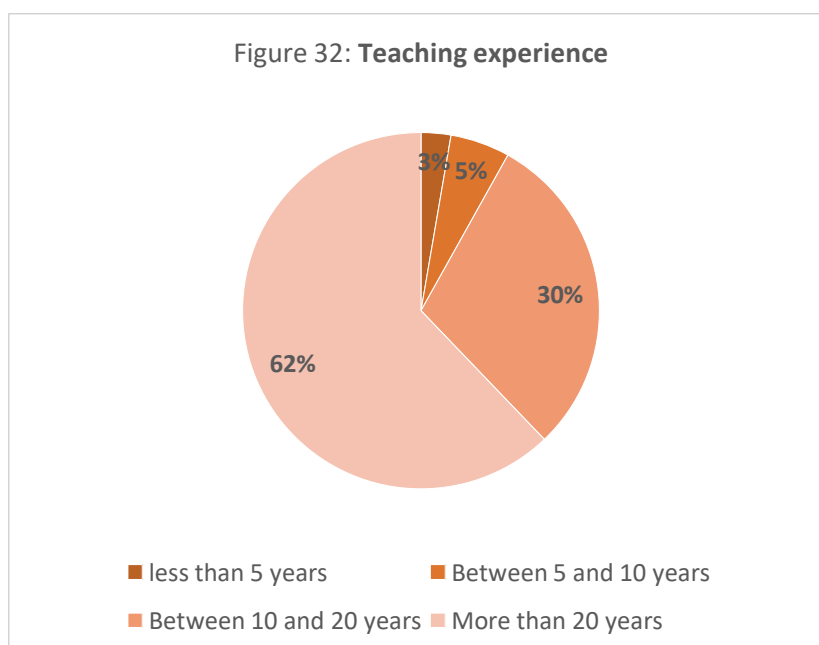
Teachers

According to a report published by the Romanian Ministry of Education (the report may be accessed [here](#)) in 2017-2018, at middle school level 72,8% of the teachers were female and at high school level 71,5% were female.

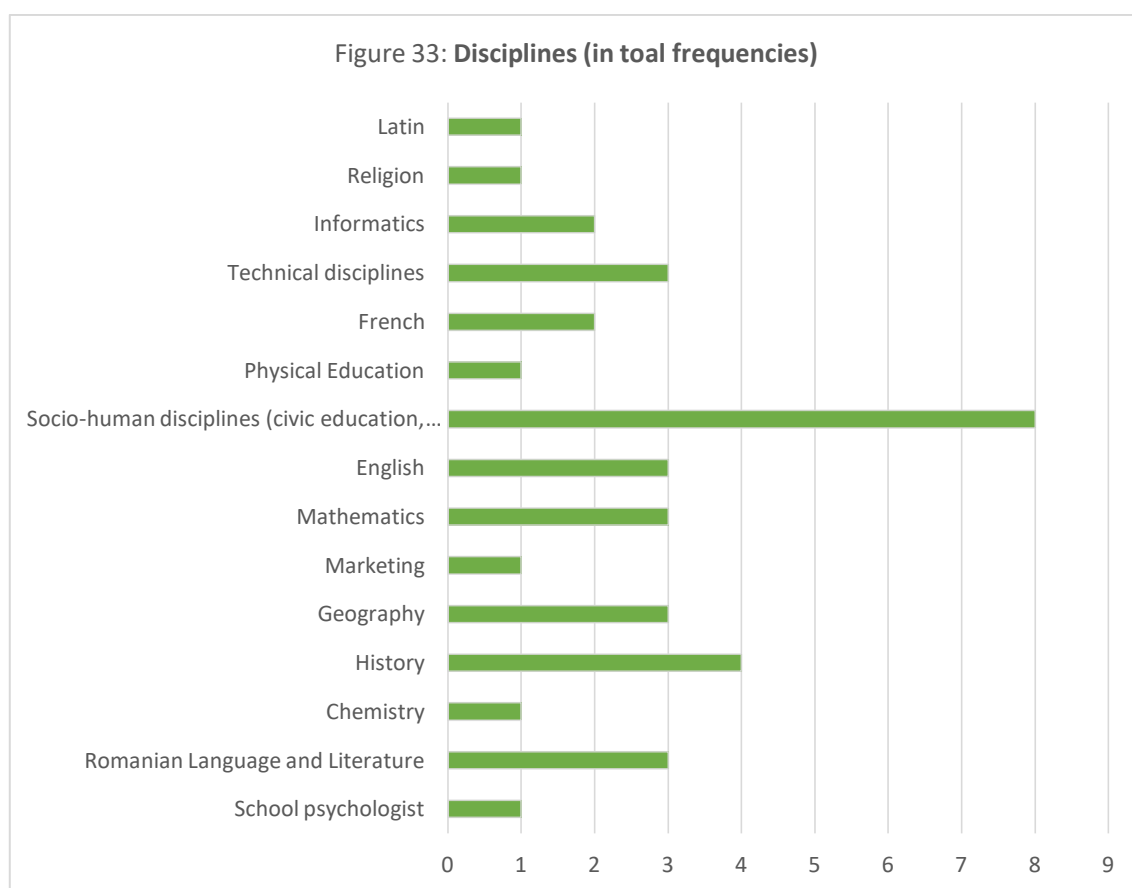
The teachers who participated to our survey are mostly females (33 teachers - 89% of the total). 8% of the respondents (3 teachers) are male and 3% (1 teacher) preferred not to answer.



Most of the respondents are teaching at higher secondary school level: 95% (35 teachers) – to students with the age between 16 and 19. 46% of the respondents (17 teachers) declared that they are teaching to lower secondary school level – to students with the age of 14 and 15. The numbers show that some of the teachers teach both at lower and higher secondary school levels, which is not unusual in Romania.



The responses to the question related to their teaching experience show that most of the teachers have a long teaching experience: 23 teachers out of 37 (62%) have more than 20 years teaching experience and 11 teachers (30%) have an experience between 10 and 20 years. The respondents teach different disciplines (Figure 34).

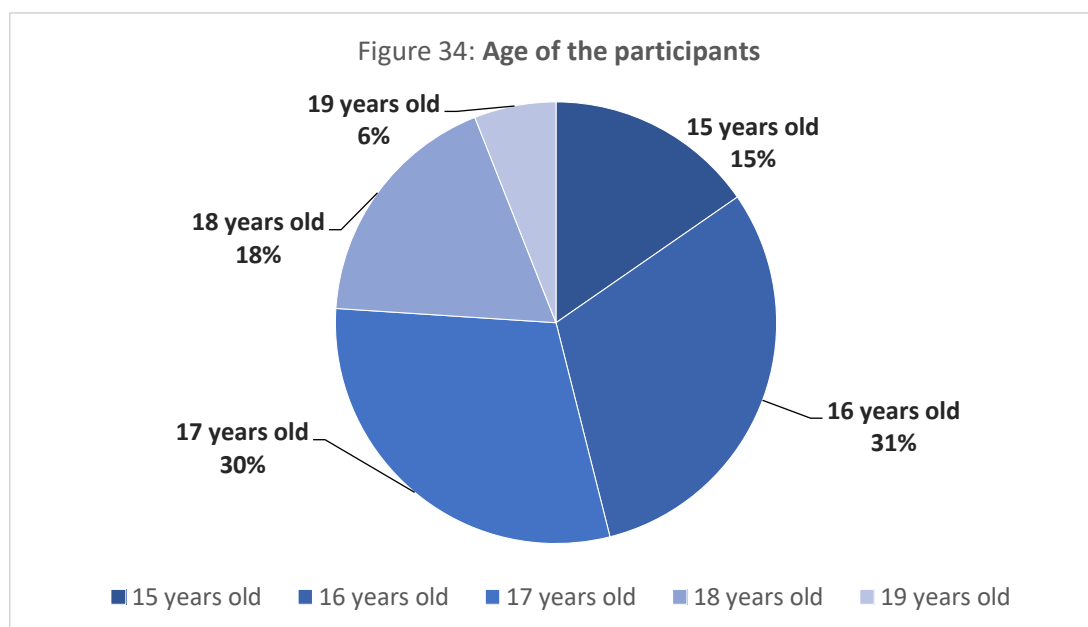


Students

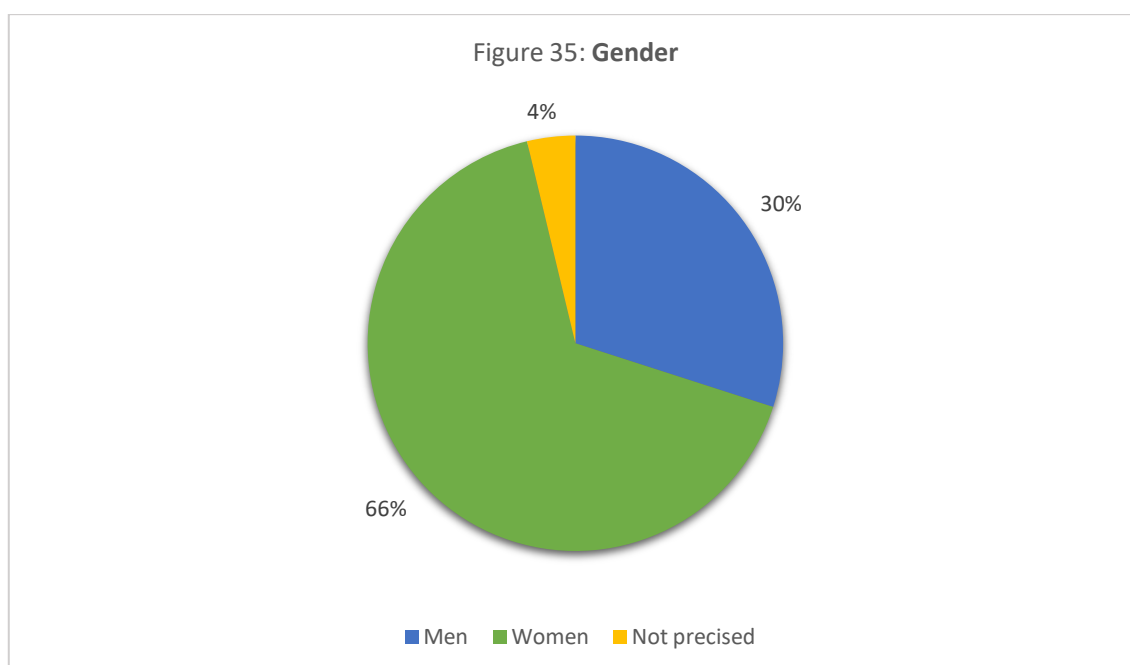
The students who filled in our questionnaire are of different ages, appropriate to our project target group. Normally, in Romania, the students in the grades from VIII to XII have the ages according to the following table:

Table 8. *Usual ages of the students in the grades from VIII to XII*

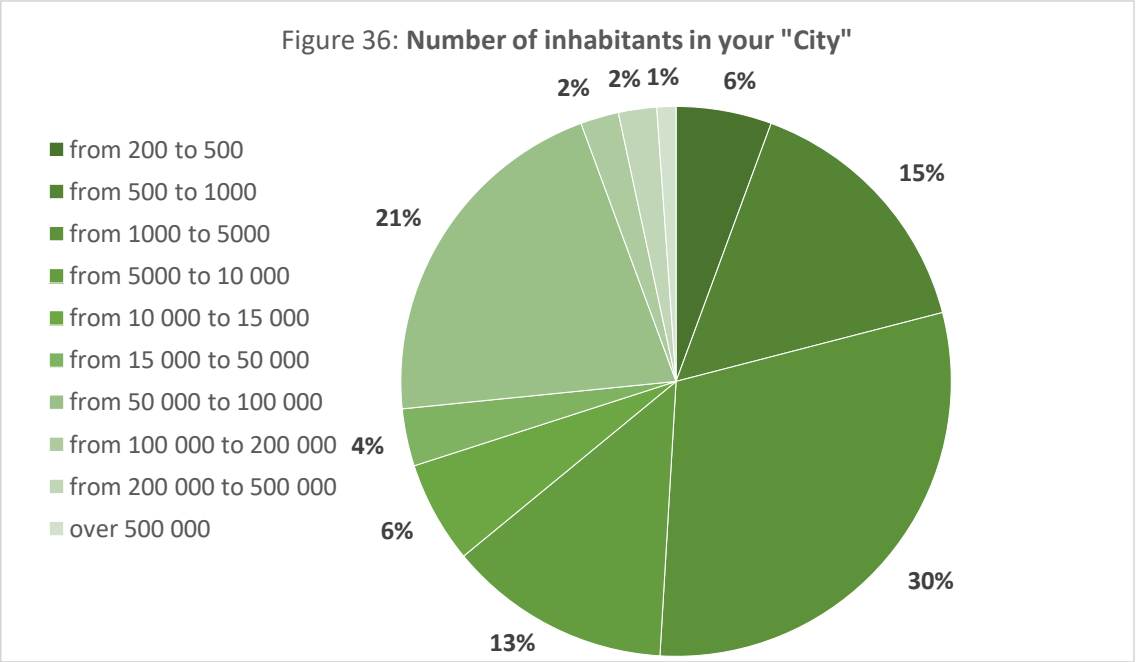
Level	Grade	Students ages
Lower secondary level	VIII	14-15
Higher secondary level	IX	15-16
	X	16-17
	XI	17-18
	XII	18-19



In terms of gender, most of the students who participated to our study are female (177 out of 267 students, 66%). 30% (80 students) are males and 4% (10 students) preferred not to say.



Regarding the places where the students live, we must mention that the survey have been sent to teachers and students from schools in Dambovită county, which means that probably all or most of the students live in Dambovită. By analysing the demographic numbers in Dambovită cities we may conclude that the places with less than 10.000 inhabitants are in rural areas and the others in urban areas. In Romania, the access to different facilities may differ a lot from rural to urban areas. Analysing the students answers we notice that almost half (51%) of the students live in rural areas and the other half in urban areas (49%).





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